the ALTERNATIVE:
AN AMERICAN SPECTATOR

Our Great Leaders
by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Just Retribution
by Walter Berns

Reassessing the Twenties
by John Chamberlain

How to Read Newsweek
by James Grant

Radical Capitalism
by Robert McTiernan

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The Continuing Crisis

HOW DIFFERENT Americans are, especially during a very dry summer. In Spain, when Chief of State Generalissimo Francisco Franco came down with phlebitis he gladly passed the reins of government to a successor. In America, when President Nixon was felled by the same malady in the Middle East, the House Judiciary Committee voted to impeach him! In the enlightened People's Republic of China, when July 17th rolled around, the Chinese commemorated Mao Tse-tung's famed Yangtse swim with a wangdoodle of a celebration, sharing many funny anecdotes about Chairman Mao's goofball life and drinking potions. In America, July 18th slipped away unadorned as hardly a soul paused to observe the fifth anniversary of Senator Teddy Kennedy's extraordinary Chappaquiddick swim. Americans forget so quickly.

■ It was a summer that visited much foul luck on many homes. Young Mr. Michael Robuck of Riverside, California was attempting to keep the wolf from his family's door when disaster struck. While robbing a supermarket he cut his foot on some glass. After taking $61.60 and binding clerk Miss Wanda Roberts into a tight little ball, he shot himself in the paw. Undaunted, he made an efficient escape, but once at home his lavish bleeding alarmed his family. After loading the audacious young breadwinner into their car, members of the family sped off to a hospital only to be apprehended in a speed trap.

■ Mr. Jesus Rodriguez encountered the same species of luck when he leaped from the Golden Gate Bridge, only to be embraced by gusting winds and smashed like a gnat into one of the many hard and uncomfortable abutments that support that famous health hazard. Mr. Rodriguez suffered two broken legs, various broken bones, a punctured lung, an enormous medical bill, and the loss of considerable esteem among his colleagues at the Oakland Sanitary Department. It went no better for Miss Mama Cass Elliott. While in London the 238-pound warbler and former flower child suffered the misfortune of having a fatal heart attack while solitarily munching a ham sandwich, a *contretemps* that gave rise to many boorish jokes regarding her controversial girth and her unscheduled departure. It was not until August 5th that London officials exculpated her sandwich and confirmed her coronary—but by then the damage was done. And in Rochester, New York, a wrecking crew with the wrong address destroyed the home of Mr. and Mrs. Sven Petersen while Mrs. Petersen was visiting neighbors. But all this was as nothing compared to the ill luck that continued to dog Mr. Richard Nixon, politician and erstwhile electronics buff, whose job security was eliminated by that myserious wave of puritanism now sweeping the very same city that made millionaires of the likes of Lyndon Johnson, Billie Sol Estes, Bobby Baker, and so many other public servants.

■ He began the summer by traveling thither and yon on behalf of peace, but eventually had to return to Washington where the Supreme Court was hard at work on *Richard M. Nixon v. United States*. In handing down its decision on July 24th the Court drew limits on confidentiality of White House files and recognized for the first time the constitutional basis for executive privilege. Consequently, Mr. Nixon had to deliver sixty-four tapes to Judge John J. Sirica for use in the criminal trial of Mr. Nixon's former Assistant Presidents. Just as this black cat had crossed Mr. Nixon's path the House Judiciary Committee voted out three articles of impeachment against him, setting the stage for an August 19th impeachment debate, a performance that was never to be, for by August 5th those sixty-four tapes revealed that Mr. Nixon had lied about his knowledge of and his role in the Watergate coverup. By August 8th the man who was at once one of the greatest and the most typical of the great presidents of this century had resigned, and the tragedy of it is that there is no indication that Washington's more adroit liars will emulate his behavior. On August 9th Vice President Gerald Ford became President, and Americans had finally put the 1960s behind them.

■ Glad tidings for nature lovers came from West Bengal, where wild life has become positively affluent. Indeed, so much so that five persons were killed and twelve others injured when a roisterous herd of drunken elephants departed a local moonshine still. A more decorous atmosphere surrounded Tokyo's grand opening of "Dog Beauty," a restaurant catering solely to dogs. Patrons can dine either at the traditional floor bowl or at tastefully appointed tables. But nature lovers in lovely Malaysia despaired when government authorities placed a bounty on the exotic North Sumatran rat, and one million of the elegant creatures succumbed within a month! Even worse news came from an American hospital where a remarkable greenleaf grasshopper who had crawled into the ear of violinist Irving Rosen, during the Philadelphia Orchestra's performance of Petrushka, was summarily executed by a brutal ear, nose, and throat specialist.

■ Civil rights leader Huey Newton continues to be persecuted for his beliefs. This time the young cofounder of the Black Panther party was arrested at a very tony Oakland night spot when he punched a cruising vice patrolman who refused the generous Mr. Newton's offer of free drinks. The political future of Puerto Rico was cast into dubiety when Miss Jane Fonda promised to take up the cause of Puerto Rican independence. And in Sarasota, Florida, a progressive television station is experimenting with an exciting and useful new talk-show format. On July 15th talk-show host Miss Christine Chubbuck announced to her audience that she had a "first" for them and promptly blasted a thirty-eight-caliber bullet into her skull. Unfortunately, several days later she expired.

■ In Chicago, Mr. Artimus Washington (no relation to the former president) and Miss Melody Sutton had another disagreement over the score of a Chicago Cubs baseball game, and, as Miss Sutton reached for her .38, Mr. Washington shot her seven times. Miss Sutton, who is 78, is recovering slowly. Mr. Otto Kerner, the former Federal Judge and Governor of Illinois began a three-year prison term on July 29th and former Secretary of the Treasury John Connally was indicted on July 31st by a Watergate Jury on charges of having accepted a bribe, committing perjury, and conspiring to obstruct justice. On August 9th he pled not guilty. And though the average age of a laying hen is only about two years, Mrs. Mildred Benschaff of Wadsworth, Ohio insists her brown bantam hen, Little Brownie, has passed its nineteenth year.

■ The blossoming economy of Mitchell, Indiana, whose main industry is school buses, began to wilt in July when the Supreme Court decided that busing to achieve racial balance could not be extended beyond city limits. An abortive coup in Cyprus led to the downfall of the infamous Greek junto and the return to Greece of democracy and Miss Melina Mercouri. Singing sensation Mr. John W. Dean III was sentenced to from one to four years for his part in the Watergate Infamy, and Mr. John Ehrlichman is appealing his conviction for the role he allegedly played in the conspiracy to violate the civil rights of Doctor Lewis Fielding, an obscure Beverly Hills shrink.

■ And then there is the specter of the NFL players' strike that has haunted the sports world through much of the summer. The Sweat Barons have turned a deaf ear to the demands of the players who depict their situation as not dissimilar to that of yesteryear's indentured servants. At this writing the players' strike continues, though their condition is becoming desperate. The compassion of many college students is being awakened despite the fact that a majority of Americans see the players as ingrates and swindlers. Yet some Americans thankfully still take an old fashioned pride in their work, and when Rhode Island newspapers erroneously reported that he had been arrested "on the spot" during a drug store break-in, professional burglar Mr. D. R. Evans issued an indignant clarifying statement from his maximum security cell. Pithily he asserted that such reports were "an affront to my professionalism and skill. I was picked up an hour later and a mile away. The drug store is next to the North Providence police station," he added proudly, "so technically I should have been caught on the spot. I wish this article rectified and the true story told." Such was the spirit that made this country great! □

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Editorial

Political Leadership: A Question Flummoxed

AS SOCIETIES GO, modern American society is a bit offbeat; in many ways it is not a society at all. Rather it is a vast snoozing herd whose insular members are constantly driven and abused by a multitude of antagonistic tribes, furiously pursuing their own divers obsessions while insisting that their obsessions are the heart's delight of all Americans. Such claims are of course tommyrot, for the majority of Americanoes really only want to be left peacefully to bask in the gentle glow of their television sets. Nevertheless the tribes continue to stir up their fellows with a string of gorgeously vexed questions which are rarely serious but which are guaranteed to addle that vestige of community still gasping for life in this great republic.

One such question recently inflicted upon us all is the question of our future political leadership. Whom has the Deity ordained to lead our famed nation from its present drear? Where does he live, and now will he make himself known to us? Does he pay taxes, and has he committed any indiscretions in his black four-door Oldsmobile 88 lately? Who took his Spanish exam while he was at Harvard? These and related questions curl the hairs of that tribe of Americans that is loosely referred to as the good government clique. These questions are supposed to fill us with spasms of woe and get us thinking seriously about the constituent elements of leadership...but not too seriously. For from the way the good government clique sculpts its questions about leadership, the only answers that ever suggest themselves are at once self-serving and imbecilic, always conjuring up apparitions of a handsome busybody waving a magic wand over City Hall.

Now the question of America's future political leadership is a swampy one full of dangers, shrouded in uncertainties and reeking with *Angst*. I have cheerfully devoted to it a good deal of my time, and I am conscience-bound to admit that the answers are not nearly so apocalyptical as the good government clique would have us believe. In fact tomorrow will be much the same as today. As I see it, Americans can rest confident in the knowledge that for the foreseeable future the public trust generally will remain in the hands of the usual crowd of idiots and mountebanks. Americans have little to fear. The land that raised from the muck Fillmore, Harding, and Kennedy will not deny itself a Richardson, a Mondale, or yet another Kennedy. How could it go any other way?

Consider the bogus ingredients which our political seers insist upon in their dynamic democratic leaders. The recipe generally includes abundant portions of "sincerity," "boldness," "innovation," and a kind of public solicitude that takes on the character of neurosis. Mention such qualities to any man on the street, and he will insist that you are describing a swindler, a gigolo, or an automobile salesman, but associate these qualities with a local candidate for dog catcher and he is immediately transformed into a successor to the Hon. John Lindsay. What is more, if your candidate can intone a few dithyrambs of toadying rhetoric and some utopian promises, he will be in danger of becoming presidential material. It is the pallid but awful condition of American politics that of all the silly qualities which ingratiate a candidate to his constituency there is hardly a one that cannot be dissembled by the greenest performer of soap operas, almost all are drawn from the repertoire of the con man, and some are the instruments of the buffoon.

Oh it is true that many of the textbooks claim that candidates must possess a devotion to things like compromise, due process, and some sort of constitutional justice, but any office seeker who confected the wisdom of college government textbooks into his campaign would become either a laughingstock or a public nuisance. He would be put into a museum or made an imperial wizard of Common Cause, Inc. henceforth to be trotted out as a fundraising lure for crowds of good government's chumps. He would not be elected; Americans cannot digest even these vaporous qualities.

Ever since that sad hour when old Abe's ghost staggered skyward, has any candidate anywhere in this vast nation of laws proclaimed or evinced ever so coyly the values of the Founding Fathers? Imagine an American pol being recommended to the electorate for his sobriety, restraint, competence, and virtue, while campaigning on a platform that stressed moderate expectations. Imagine a candidate who actually had an idea—not a fine idea or even a genuine idea, but any kind of idea. Hah! The thought is obscene.

Or imagine a candidate with the temerity actually to define himself according to a set of principles for which he holds some semblance of devotion. Such a man would leave the ward heelers and the seers shaking their empty coconuts. In fact such a man did leave them so beshook just ten years ago, and his disastrous showing at the polls persuaded a whole generation of wisenheimers that if one ever wants to get anywhere in American life—at least in American political life—it behooves him to believe in nothing whatsoever or at least to be prudent enough not to admit to his beliefs.

So it is that we behold sweating mobs of empty-headed American pols incessantly prattling about their unsurpassed compassion, sincerity, humanity, and solicitude for everything from the lowly Arapaho to the whooping crane. We hear speeches that promise the world of the sugar plum fairy while bathing us in Mazola Oil. We see one great political party dominated by Teddy Kennedy and Carl Albert and another that gave itself over to the artistry of J. Walter Thompson. Let us steel ourselves to our condition. Let us face the music. Mr. Nixon's White House is what we deserved, and the Hero of Chappaquiddick is our condign tomorrow. A congress vegetant with idiots like Bella Abzug and con artists like the Hon. Ron Dellums is right and proper. The only thing that astonishes me is that we do not have more Justice Siricas scowling from behind the bench. But then a system that had the good humor to hatch Earl Warren and William O. Douglas should not be expected to bring forth many Cromwells or Caligulas.

The long and the short of it is that Americans do not think seriously about democratic government. I take this to be a residue of our historic disrelish for pervasive government or perhaps a luxury indulged in by a people whose ancestors worked prodigies with democratic theory almost two centuries ago. But I fear it is now time for the great mass of Americans to rouse themselves to a serious consideration of their political system and of the hinds in charge. What is more, Americans really ought to gather themselves up into a society again. Can they do this when most of the power of government has been arrogated by the Washington mob? When idiotic notions like the current enthusiasm for ethnic pride have such heady influence? When responsible involvement in local government is a distraction from the television and a distraction that seems to have no function? And can they do it when trendy ideology denies that individuals have a place in society, a place in the universe and a purpose in life? Of course not; so bring on the Kennedys, bring on the *Angst*, and bring on the beer. Personally, I relish the spectacle.

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

The Alternative: An American Spectator

October, 1974

Walter Berns

Justified Anger; Just Retribution

Between 1966 and 1971 the U.S. murder rate increased by 52 percent, and the crime rate as a whole by 74 percent, as reported in *Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Reports, 1971*. Crimes of violence (murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) went up 80 percent. In 1971 there were 5,995,200 index crimes (crimes catalogued by the FBI) reported to the police, and everyone knows that a large number of crimes are never reported to the police. The proportion of arrests to crimes reported was only 19 percent, persons charged 17 percent, persons convicted as charged 5 percent, and persons convicted of lesser offenses .9 percent. All of which means that punishment was meted out in only 5.7 percent of the *known* cases of crime.

The conclusion is inescapable: crime pays. Moreover, some authorities insist that most crimes are not reported to the police and that only 1½ percent of all crimes are punished, which is to say that 98½ percent of the crimes committed go unpunished. There is good reason to believe that something is wrong; there is no reason yet to believe—by which I mean, there is no reason in these statistics to believe—that what is wrong could be put right by the imposition of more severe punishments, although there *is* reason to believe that it might be put right by *more* punishments, or by a greater rate of punishments, a rate sufficient to allow us to say that crime does not pay, or does not pay so well.

Prevent or Punish?

Such a judgment, however, rests on an assumption: that crime is deterred by punishment. This is rejected by a powerful group of reformers, led, perhaps, by a former Attorney General of the United States, Ramsey Clark. He says that we "can prevent nearly all of the crime now suffered in America—if we care" (*Crime in America* [1970], p. 21), and the evidence of our caring would consist not in trying to deter crime by punishing it more efficiently, but by rehabilitating those who commit it. "Rehabilitation," he writes, "must be the goal of modern corrections. Every other consideration should be subordinated to it." In its most exaggerated form—as it appears in the work of psychiatrist Karl Menninger, for example—the only criminals are those who would inflict punishment on those who commit what society now calls crimes. *The Crime of Punishment*, he entitles his book. "Scientific studies have shown that most punishment does not accomplish any of the purposes by which it is justified, but neither the law nor the public cares anything about that. The real justification for punishment is none of these rational 'purposes,' but irrational zeal for inflicting pain upon one who has inflicted pain (or harm or loss)" (*The Crime of Punishment*, p. 113). I quote another passage: "And there is one crime we all keep committing over and over. I accuse the reader of this—and myself, too—and all the nonreaders. We commit the crime of damning some of our fellow citizens with the label 'criminal.' And having done this, we force them through an experience that is soul-searing and dehumanizing. In this way we exculpate ourselves from the guilt *we* feel and tell ourselves that we do it to 'correct' the 'criminal' and make us all safer from crime. We commit this crime every day that we retain our present stupid, futile, abominable practices against detected offenders." (*The Crime of Punishment*, p. 9).

Can We "Cure" Criminals?

Rehabilitation is the solution: treatment will cure most of the so-called criminals, Menninger says in a chapter entitled "Love against Hate." We must love those we call criminals, and out of this love will come treatment and the solution to the problem. One is reminded of Nietzsche's words written almost a century ago: "There is a point in the history of society when it becomes so pathologically soft and tender that among other things it sides even with those who harm it, criminals, and does this quite seriously and honestly. Punishing somehow seems unfair to it, and it is certain that imagining 'punishment' and 'being supposed to punish' hurts it, arouses fear in it. 'Is it not enough to render him *undangerous*? Why still punish? Punishing itself is terrible'" (*Beyond Good and Evil*, [Kaufmann trans.] Sec. 201). Be that as it may, what, in fact, is the evidence as to rehabilitation?

The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice, in one of its task force reports, tried to convince us that rehabilitation works and can be made to work better, and one is inclined to think that this must be so. After all, we have to a great extent been led to think that crime is somehow and in some way an illness, and we have lots of doctors around. The Commission directs our attention to the California Youth Authority Community Treatment Project, which is well known in the field of corrections as the best of the rehabilitation programs. Prisoners are paroled and are counseled, individually and in groups, and are tutored in school subjects, and so on. The effectiveness of the program is then evaluated by comparing the recidivism rate among these persons and the rate among those who are not paroled. According to the Task Force, the difference is marked and altogether in favor of the effectiveness of the rehabilitation program. Unfortunately, this is simply not true. The Task Force did not take into consideration the proclivity of those who administer and evaluate these programs, especially at state budget time, to exaggerate the efficacy of their own work. An independent re-analysis of the evidence shows "that the positive results

in favor of the experimental group over the control group reflected not differences in the delinquent behavior of the boys, but differences in the parole-revoking behavior of the parole agents" (Kasebaum, Ward, and Wilmer, *Prison Treatment and Parole Survival*, [1971], p. 308). One researcher, after assessing a variety of "correctional programs," concluded that, "Post-release outcome was not significantly different irrespective of exposure to any type of group counseling program . . . " (*Ibid.*, p. 251). This altogether discouraging, but not altogether unexpected, conclusion is confirmed now by the most thoroughgoing study of parole ever completed. A comparison was made of the recidivism rate among those paroled from Ontario prisons and those who served their full time, and the different rate was accounted for by the fact that better risks are selected for parole. "When one allows for the fact that better risks are selected for parole, parolees are no less likely to be re-arrested than those who are discharged [after serving a full term in prison]" (Irvin Waller, *Men Released from Prison*, [1974], p.199).

Is Death Penalty a Deterrent?

So much for rehabilitation. What about the extent to which crime is deterred by punishment, and especially the crime of murder by capital punishment? Dr. Menninger, you will recall, claims that "scientific studies" have shown that "most punishment" does not accomplish "any of the purposes by which it is justified," and since it is usually justified on the ground of deterrence, this would mean that punishment does not deter. This is probably not the case; in fact, a number of recent studies, some of them dealing specifically with homicide rates, show an inverse relation between punishment and the rate of crime. This confirms what our common sense tells us, and these studies have also been confirmed by the most sophisticated analysis yet undertaken. Using a simultaneous equation model for a regression analysis involving some fourteen discrete variables, only three of them having anything to do with punishment, and a mass of crime statistics from most of the states over a period of time (1940, 1950, 1960), Isaac Ehrlich was able to show that the "rate of specific felonies is . . . positively related to estimates of relative gains [the more money to be gained by stealing, the more attempts made to steal it] and negatively related to estimates of costs associated with criminal activity." Hence, the "rate of specific crime categories, with virtually no exceptions, varies inversely with estimates of the probability of apprehension and punishment by imprisonment . . . and with the average length of time served in state prisons. . . ." (*Journal of Political Economy*, [May-June, 1973, p. 545). These findings suggest that big-city mayors are not wrong to argue for larger police forces and longer sentences for the criminals caught by these police forces.

Since Ehrlich dealt with time in prison—that is to say, the range of punishments did not include the death penalty—we are not entitled to say that he proved the deterrence value of the death penalty. We can say, however, that if the death penalty is regarded as the most dreadful penalty—and the abolitionists so regard it—his findings do suggest the deterrence value of it. This is so because the greater the penalty, the "higher the costs associated with criminal activity," and the higher these costs, the fewer crimes committed. The abolitionists are not inclined to accept these findings. They have insisted that murder especially is a crime of passion, a crime committed in the heat of passion, or under the influence of alcohol, and therefore, by persons least able and least likely to calculate costs, or the "incentives and disincentives," to use Ehrlich's formulation. If this argument proves anything, however, it proves the opposite of what the abolitionists contend. It suggests that because of the high costs, murders tend to be committed *only* by those unable to calculate those costs, and that those able to calculate those costs are less likely to commit murders.

Justification of Punishment

But does the death penalty act as a deterrent? Does it deter the commission of homicides, for example? Thorsten Sellin says the evidence shows clearly that it does not, and his findings have been cited around the world. H.L.A. Hart, in a more guarded statement, says there is no evidence that it does deter. Mostly it has been chiefs of police who have disagreed and who have insisted that the death penalty is necessary because it does deter. What is of particular interest to me is that in modern times almost the entire argument concerning the death penalty has taken place within the limits of this aspect of the subject. This assumes that deterrence is the only possible justification for the death penalty and for punishment in general, that we employ police to prevent the commission of crimes, if possible, but that we employ prosecutors and criminal trials and prisons and executioners to prevent further offenses by those we catch up in this system and to deter others—*pour decourager les autres*, to paraphrase Voltaire. It seems to me that this is patently not sufficient.

When we say make the punishment fit the crime, we are plainly not talking about deterrence. When the abolitionists advocate life imprisonment, instead of the death penalty for murderers, they are quite plainly not concerned with deterrence, because these same abolitionists insist that murderers, in addition to being model prisoners, are, of all criminals, the least likely to repeat their crimes. If the death penalty does not deter, and if they are unlikely to repeat their crimes anyway, why bother to put them in prison at all? Why bother to arrest them? And if deterrence is the only purpose of punishment, why a life sentence for a murderer and a couple of months for a prostitute, who is likely to repeat her offense? And why do we continue to resist the arguments of the so-called reformers, usually the psychiatrists, who would remodel the entire system in order to make the punishment (or the treatment) fit the criminal, according to which rule it is entirely possible that the prostitute and the shoplifter will remain in custody longer than the murderer?

Penalties Reflect Principles

It is quite clear, I think, that the schedule of penalties to be found in any criminal code reflects some principle other than deterrence. We punish murder more severely than shoplifting or conspiracies to obstruct justice because we regard murder as a much more serious crime. We punish murder more severely than larceny, even grand larceny, because we regard the taking of a human life as a much more grave offense than the taking of property in whatever amount. I insist that we take a life—after due process of law—precisely because we value life, although the abolitionists have heaped so much ridicule on this proposition that it has become unfashionable in our day to say so. The result is that we find the retentionists disputing Professor Sellin's deterrence statistics, as if the whole question of capital punishment turned on its power to deter. Our schedule of punishments reflects what we have been made ashamed to admit now, namely, that in addition to the effort to deter crime, we punish in order *to pay back*, to retribute. Retribution constitutes a justification for punishment, and, I shall argue, it is altogether proper to pay back a murderer in kind. Our schedules of punishment are an effort to make punishment fit the crime; to agree with this principle is to agree that retribution should play a role in punishment.

What should we do with John Wilkes Booth and Lee Harvey Oswald, killers of presidents? Karl Menninger would have us treat Booth—after all, it is a crime to punish him; and suppose we are successful in his treatment, and after a year, say, we pronounce him cured, he returns to the community promising never to do it again. But Abraham Lincoln is dead. There is such a gross disproportion between Booth's deed and Menninger's response to it; and I submit that in that disproportion there is embodied an implicit disrespect for Lincoln's life, for human life. For the dignity of human life is displayed in Lincoln's life, and in our punishing of Booth (as we would not punish a dog or a horse); but the dignity of human life is not displayed in Booth's life or in Lee Harvey Oswald's life. Something of this is contained in the principle that the punishment should fit the crime. Would it have been proper to put Lee Harvey Oswald in a minimum security prison, even for life? Or not put him in prison at all—after all, do we not know from statistics that murderers are the least likely of criminals to repeat their crime? Why is it that we cannot accept that conclusion?

Crime is the Guide

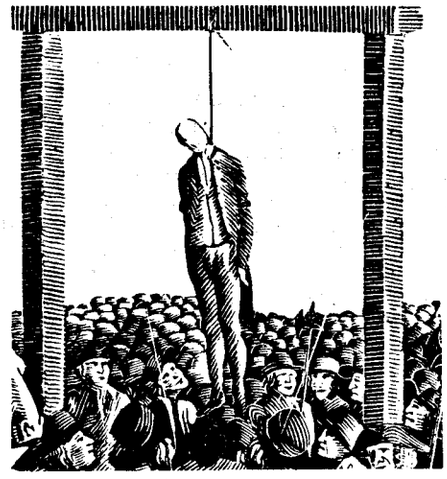
Menninger and his colleagues tell us to make the punishment fit the criminal, not the crime; they are guided by the criminal; they are not guided by the crime. And because they are not guided by the crime, they minimize the crime; they ignore the difference in the magnitude of crimes; in their response, they ignore the enormity of some crimes and the pettiness of others. By making the punishment fit the criminal instead of the crime, they would do away with the schedule of punishments whereby the more serious crimes are punished more severely. But in that schedule is reflected our idea of what is important to man, and what it is to be a man. To do away with it, to obliterate it from the law, is to depreciate the importance and the significance of human actions and, thereby, of human life. To remove it from the law is to reveal a disrespect for human life. It is not by chance that the argument against the death penalty is a modern argument, and only a modern argument; it is not by chance that no political philosopher argued against the death penalty; it is not by chance that the argument against the death penalty seems to have come out of Hobbes by way of Beccaria, although Hobbes, of course, did not make it. For from Hobbes we learn the right of self-preservation; and from Hobbes we learn that the first law of nature is to seek peace; and as a result, *mere* life took on an importance it lacked in the past. *Mere* life is a life without dignity; *mere* life—just staying alive—lacks significance; and *mere* life—purposeless life—turns out to be life very cheaply regarded indeed.

It is not strange that retribution has been made to appear to be the most abominable of sentiments, and that so many tears are shed for the murderers today, at a time when innocent human lives are being taken in ever greater numbers, and are being taken not only in fits of passion, by the amateur murderers, but in cold blood by the professional murderers, and not only by them but by heads of state acting in the name of what they call science, a so-called racial science in the case of Hitler, and a so-called science of history in the case of Stalin and Mao. Why should human lives, even six or thirty million of them, stand in the way of history? Why should these millions of what are regarded as purposeless human lives stand in the way of history, when meaning is contained in history, not in human lives?

Retribution in Ill Repute

It is not strange that retribution is held in such ill repute at a time when human life is held so cheap in the literature we read and the films we see, and on which we bestow our prizes. Shakespeare's Macbeth killed for a kingdom, at a time when the world and the lives within it had meaning; and the consequences of his murder were terrible: the cosmos turned into chaos. Dostoievsky's Raskolnikov killed for profit during the solid, calculating 19th century, but because of that act he somehow found God and learned that murder is terrible. Camus's Meursault (in *L'Etranger*) killed for no reason at all, at a time when human life is regarded as having no meaning at all. And in that much-honored film, *The Godfather*," the taking of human life is a regular business practice, like making a bank deposit.

So far I have considered deterrence and retribution as independent justifications for capital punishment. But there is a point where they come together. We can recognize that point of convergence when we acknowledge that the law works by praising as well as by blaming. The law blames when it prescribes punishment for certain acts and when it subjects those who commit those acts to punishment. We see that easily enough. We tend to forget, however, that in punishing the guilty (when it blames the deed he commits), the law praises those who do not commit the deed. The law praises righteousness and obedience to law. This point is well made by Adam Smith: we resent the



criminal, he says. So much do we resent him, that not only do we wish to see him punished, but we wish to see him punished by our own hand and for the crime he committed. We feel cheated, he says, if the criminal should die of a fever before he is brought to justice. And with respect to murder, "nature, antecedent to all reflections upon the utility of punishment, has in this manner stamped upon the human heart, in the strongest and most indelible characters, an immediate and instinctive approbation of the sacred and necessary law of retaliation" (*Theory of Moral Sentiments*, [Kelley ed.], p. 99). This passion—which he labels resentment—must of course be tamed; it must be tamed lest it become simple revenge, the "most detestable of the passions." It is the job of the law to tame this passion, which the law does by satisfying it. The law tames that passion, that anger we feel in the presence of injustice, by satisfying it, and it satisfies it when it brings the guilty to justice and when it pays him back.

Last summer, for example, a seven-year-old boy was brutally murdered on the lower East Side of Manhattan. The next day, in a nearby neighborhood, a 28-year-old girl was stabbed to death in the doorway to her apartment. The police caught the man suspected of doing it, and had a hard time protecting him from an angry crowd of local residents. A week later a 31-year-old man was stabbed to death by a burglar in his Ninth Avenue apartment, this before the eyes of his wife. I now quote from *The New York Times* account of these events (Sunday, August 26, 1973. News of the Week, p. 6): "On the lower East Side, most residents seemed to agree with the police that the next time a murder suspect is identified, Tuesday's mob scene is very likely to be repeated. There is a widespread feeling that the police, the courts, the entire criminal justice system simply acts out a sort of charade, and that it is up to the community to demand that justice is done. 'When the police find him, they'll just say he's a sick man and send him to a hospital for two years,' said . . . a Delancey Street shopkeeper. 'Then he'll be right back on the street. The only thing to do is to kill this man right away, quickly and quietly."

Injustice Arouses Justified Anger

That anger is not reprehensible. Anger is the sentiment aroused by the sight of injustice, and is therefore intimately allied with justice—and civil society requires justice. But that anger has to be tamed, and the local police alone cannot do it. I mean, the police protecting the suspect at the police station cannot tame that anger unless they can assure that righteously angry crowd that the murderer will be paid back. But there is more in this than immediately meets the eye: that anger is satisfied when retribution is exacted, yes, but that righteous anger is also *rewarded* when retribution is exacted. And that righteous anger should be rewarded, for its basis is the sentiment that to murder is wrong. The law blames murder when it punishes the murderer; the law praises those who do not murder when it punishes that murderer, and in this way deters murder. "Many are the pangs of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds him who trusts in the Lord. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice. O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart" (Psalms 32, vs. 10-11).

The abolitionists, following modern thought, want to excise anger from the soul—to get rid of it rather than to make a virtue of controlling it. To them anger is mere selfishness and altogether reprehensible. But if anger is a natural attribute of the human soul, one is bound to wonder how it will manifest itself when it is denied its legitimate expression, however tamed. And what would a world without anger be like? Nietzsche thought this through and called what he saw in his imagination the world of the Last Man. □

Prof. Berns recently delivered this essay at the Center for Constructive Alternatives, Hillsdale College.

Rev. Anthony Clavier

Reflections on a Pile of Bunting

I EXPECT TO suffocate in a pile of bunting. Though still somewhat disorganized, the celebration machine is being cranked into action and by 1976 the peoples of these United States will be doing all they can, under the circumstances, to celebrate the two-hundredth anniversary of their deliverance from the hands of British Tyranny. All of which causes the mere suggestion of uneasiness to a British Subject whose little card proclaims him to be "a resident alien," and who was brought up to believe with Sellers and Yeatman in *1066 and All That* that American history came to an end with the Revolution.

Of course, any resident alien of British birth soon gets used to a certain amount of hostile press. "Daniel Boone" as portrayed by the Hollywood histories of television always comes out in shining coonskin as he battles against boorish British soldiers led by caddish officers. Even the subtle innuendos against America's only reigning monarch, in describing Queen Elizabeth on her recent tour of Canada as "the British Queen" rather than Queen of Canada, are borne with patience. A little harder to take, perhaps, is the constant insistence on the part of leading politicians that America is Top Nation, with the best system of government, the highest standard of living, the greatest amount of personal freedom, and the biggest everything, which, even if true, ultimately sounds like a form of boasting (Not British you know!) or a process somewhat reminiscent of the type of propaganda fed to the "Lower Orders" by dictators when things are not going so well.

I'm really not so sure that there is much to celebrate, for both Britain and America have been doing their best to destroy the heritage they once held in common, and those institutions which I feel America might wisely have retained are being abandoned or neutralized in the Mother Country. We hear little nowadays of the great "English Speaking Union" linking hands across the sea—peoples joined not only by law and language, but also by birth. On the subject of this inheritance, which the two countries seem to be destroying together, allow me to highlight two of its ingredients: a system of law which has protected the essential freedom of the citizen, and a language which has framed the virtues of responsible individualism. At the same time I shall be eccentric enough to suggest that America would have done better to have retained a system, represented in England by the Monarchy, the Honors System, and a parliamentary form of government. I am sure that most of my readers will decry some of the sentiments which will follow, but I trust that they will leave retribution to the natural trend of events which will allow the writer to be deluged by offers of Bi-Centennial coins, shopping bags, t-shirts, beer mugs, and reproductions of the Declaration of Independence inscribed upon the posteriors of men's pants, all, of course, manufactured in the Crown Colony of Hong Kong.

We used to share a Common Law. In fact, America has always been a lawyer's paradise. Despite the fact that Puritan tradition obliged judges to attire themselves as Calvinist ministers, the rights of man were constitutionally safeguarded by a tradition of law based on centuries of experience. Today law is a slow, painful, expensive business, and although justice is probably eventually done, it is less and less seen to be done. To add to the burden, the law becomes daily more complicated as government churns out an endless stream of enactments. Faced with such complexity, it becomes less and less possible for anyone to remain law-abiding, and the citizen is often forced to spend considerable sums of money and even more trust in engaging legal advice. The Expert, a person traditionally mistrusted in a free society, gains more power every day.

We once shared, despite Shaw's opinion, a common language. However, an educational system engaged in leveling rather than teaching (espoused by the last Socialist Administration in England as being more truly egalitarian and thus the model for their new system) has created a society which has been given the most dangerous tool available to man. Persons now taught to read, write, and communicate without having any understanding of logic, rhetoric, or even the basic structure of a language are peculiarly open to manipulation. Words, like alcohol or drugs, are terribly dangerous when improperly used. The wholesale indoctrination of college students with revolutionary materialism, accepted with the zeal of religious enthusiasm, is only one symptom of this disease. The power of the Media is another.

It is not accidental that the growing inability to think for oneself has produced great divisions in society. The Left and the Right huddle together in mutually exclusive camps, viewing an irenic approach or a moderate position with distrust and even contempt. In practice such an attitude is not totally unreasonable since so many "pragmatists" lack a philosophy which invites an individualistic approach to issues, but rather have a devotion to the preservation of personal power or influence at all costs.

If Britons and Americans are sinking together in a legal slough of despond, wailing together with less and less comprehension, in other respects their plights are sharply different. The British tradition of government is still essentially just that—a tradition. Tradition is difficult to eradicate, and its experts are held in scant respect. America, however, with the confidence of eighteenth-century rationalism, still rests hope in the authority of the Written Word, the invincibility of Reasonable Thought. Yet as religious fundamentalists have found, once confidence in inerrancy is lost, nothing much remains. More and more, the American system of government shows the strain of what might be termed a fundamentalist concept.

The strength of the British system has been an ability to maintain the essential nature of the country, while allowing ample room for gradual change. With the exception of Cromwell's Commonwealth, no revolutionary settlement in England has brought the nation to a constitutional full stop. At present, with the loss of Empire and the emergence of "The Common Market" the British system is under severe strain. Yet the basic traditions which give the nation its unity and self-respect without resorting to any idealized concept of the State have stood up well to enfranchisement of the working class and the rise of British Socialism.

A second, oft ignored quality of British government is a built-in system which acknowledges and therefore allows for the natural thirst of the trappings of distinction. The Honors System still gives inducement to politicians and public servants to conduct themselves with a minimum of corruption by awarding them a suitable title (albeit now a rather pathetic Life Peerage) at the end of their lives. George V's handling of Ramsay MacDonald and his colleagues, and their subsequent careers, in this context, prove illuminating. The Honors List provides ample recognition without bestowing the corrupting influence of money or particular power, a recognition which depends on respect for traditional institutions. One wonders, for instance, how Tony Boyle or Eric Hoffer would have performed as union leaders with a good chance of becoming peers of the realm. Even Jane Fonda might react to the possibility of becoming a "dame," although one is forced to admit that John Lennon's membership in the Order of the British Empire did little for him; one must not discount the perversity of human nature.

One can't help reflecting that the present political scandals in America, while delighting the shade of Sir Robert Walpole, must undoubtedly horrify the ghost of the much maligned, though thoroughly upright George III. All sorts of fleeting comparisons between present-day America and former days in Britain come to mind. One sees the President cast in the role of Charles I, insisting on the Divine Rights of Presidents, while a Cromwellian Congress takes steps to cut off the money. Senator Sam Ervin, like Pym and Hampton before him, does battle against a corrupt court of favorites. Meanwhile,

McGovern with his band of Levellers and Fifth Monarchy Men, armed with a Puritan horror for the weakness of the Reprobate, dream of the Millennial Rule of the Saints, and no doubt have selected a new "Praise God Barebones" to act as Speaker of a Rump Congress after the Civil War.

In a country like America, made up of such a conglomeration of cultures, races, and ethnic backgrounds, such an antiquated scenario doesn't seem to serve well. The only symbols of national unity left, now that the Presidency is reduced to being solely a political office, are the Flag and the Constitution. As we have seen of late, the Flag can be a symbol of disunity, representing to the conservative an ideal which seems to have been lost, and to the liberal, an establishment to be overthrown. The poor old Constitution, relic of a day when written truth was God, like the Bible of the fundamentalist, is now open to so many interpretations, and lies prostrate before the secular Higher Critics, the Legal Experts, the Pantheon of Justices of the Supreme Court. Can an Englishman not wonder whether Crown and Parliament do a better job, expressing unity in terms of family—and a real family at that, warts and all—and representation for the people in a manner affected by day-by-day public pressure, as the Executive stands open before the legislators?

The Tyrant George is dead! In England, he was never really alive. But in America we have put in his place a less colorful specimen. He is the Expert. He excels in gaining and holding power, in drugging the populace with a torrent of words, in dealing in those vast areas of our life which we can no longer manage. While the Right loses sleep over the plots of the Left, and the Left dreams dreams of Utopia, the real tyrant, the Pragmatist-Expert, works his wicked will, and a Bi-Centenary of Freedom more and more resembles the Passover Feast of the captive Jews in Babylon. □

John Chamberlain

The Twenties: Salute to an Ancien Regime

"SO WE BEAT ON, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past." But to those of us who have been there already, *le temps retrouve* is not always *le temps perdu*. Nostalgia has generational overtones, and everyman's past is his own. The "Gatsby look" is real, but is it the inner savor?

Not too long ago I tried to talk about the newspapers and newspapermen of the twenties to a generation that doesn't even remember Eisenhower. Oh, yes, the journalistic twenties were comprehensible enough when you mentioned Ben Hecht's and Charles MacArthur's raucous play, *The Front Page*, which dealt with life in a Chicago city room. Lexicographers differ about the Indian origin of the word Chicago, some saying it means skunk and others insisting it means wild onion, but in any case the vision of journalism in *The Front Page* fits the skunk-onion stereotype by being exceedingly wild and overpoweringly malodorous. But was the newspaper kingdom of the twenties that way, even in the Place of the Wild Onion?

Again, the twenties—they are always the Roaring Twenties—are comprehensible if the tale is of the Jazz Age, when diamonds, besides being a girl's best friend, came as big as the Ritz. The twenties are comprehensible, too, if you mention Old Joe Kennedy, the Wall Street freebooter who, in the immortal words of Joan Didion, raided the country for provender to pay for the Hyannisport compound in which his sons were raised to be idealists on papa's (and other people's) money. The big bad businessman is remembered as the culprit who plunged the country into the worst of historic depressions. The stereotype says he got his just comeuppance when Dick Whitney, the floor broker of the Morgans, went to jail and when the good Saint Franklin drove the money changers from the temple and put a reformed Joe Kennedy in as first boss of the SEC. (Joe was supposed to know all the tricks from first-hand experience.)

The twenties were oil men trying to steal Teapot Dome and Elk Hills; they were hip flasks of Jersey Lightning at football games when the Yalies, to please themselves and Westbrook Pegler, rose as one raccoon; they were bobbed hair and Clara Bow, the "it" girl; they were the day of the big murder trials (Ruth Snyder and Judd Gray); they were Florida building lots, sold while they were still under water; they were bootblacks speculating in a market that required only ten dollars down on a hundred. They were also Al Capone and other racketeers, called into being by the insatiable thirst of a country club set that had taken over the morals of Greenwich Village for its generic Appointment in Samara. Oh, yes, they were all of these things, and many more like them, the gawdawfullest collection of harum-scarum bizarrerie that ever happened before the advent of the late nineteen sixties, when pot took over for bathtub gin and when lesbians crawled out of the Well of Loneliness to become respected examples of women's liberation.

I have seen all of these things documented, but were they the twenties? I wanted to be a literary critic in those days, and I dutifully read all the books. They wore petting shirts in *This Side of Paradise*, and Ring Lardner's ball players were appropriately obtuse. Mencken and Nathan laughed at the booboisie. But a period, if it is to be presented as demonstrably decadent, must have a demiurge toward dissolution. The twenties never had that. On the contrary, the twenties represented positive will. The novels of the time prove it.

Has anyone read Sinclair Lewis lately, in seriatim fashion? No doubt *Main Street* derived from what Carl Van Doren called the tradition of revolt from the village, but Carol Kennicott wanted to bring Maeterlinck to the hinterlands, which, if an Irish bull may be permitted, was not a defeatist ambition. *Babbitt* was, well, a book about a Babbitt, but it was also a book about a love affair with a city, laughable if you like in the form that it took but not nefarious in origin. The Greeks and the Romans loved their cities, too. Sinclair Lewis's Dodsworth (see *Dodsworth*) was no Babbitt, but he was no market-playing Joe Kennedy either; he was a businessman who wanted to give value for value. The scientist hero of Lewis's *Arrowsmith* took shape from Paul de Kruif's gallery of Microbe Hunters, men of intense application. The "big four" of Lewis's books present vivid examples of the human will, pushing forward on the assumption that will is free. If Lewis's fraudulent preacher Elmer Gantry is a deviation from the rule, his Ann Vickers, the early women's libber, represents a return to willful dedication. And who but a dedicated man could regard a good hotel as a Work of Art? I once watched Sinclair Lewis, in the company of his wife, Dorothy Thompson, query the proprietor of the St. George Hotel in Bermuda on the mysteries of his business. It almost wore me out to listen, and it must have bored Dorothy Thompson half to death, for she was watching an exhausting reportorial performance for what must have been the eighteenth time.

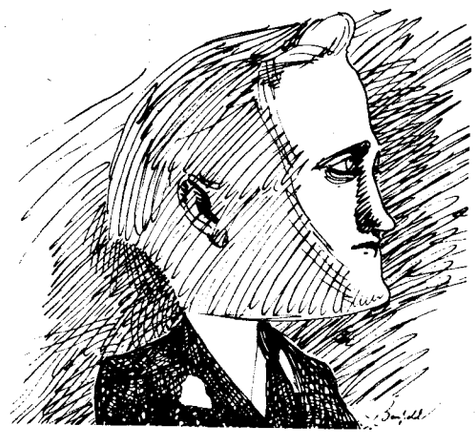
The twenties began with a genre which we called the Quest Book. The formula was provided by Compton Mackenzie's *Sinister Street*. The young man or woman comes out of school seeking Life. The seeker is Floyd Dell's Felix Fay in *Mooncalf* or the Dell "modern girl" in *Janet March*. The "quest" is for beauty in work and love and social organization, stupid in its anti-marriage-vow feeling and witless in its trust in utopian socialism, but hardly cynical in the way the sixties were cynical (who was it who said, circa 1969, "I am in the movement to meet chicks and get

laid?"). In his own personal quest, Scott Fitzgerald, fantastically faithful to Zelda, remarked on his need for personal relationships that would be complete. His girls, as he said, were always warm and promising, but he couldn't take any of them casually. Scott's drinking fits the stereotype of the twenties, but his attitude toward sex does not. As for Scott's friend Ernest Hemingway, he had a compulsion to idealize his women (in sleeping bags or out). Hemingway, on sex, doesn't fit the stereotype of the twenties any more than Fitzgerald. True, he wrote about promiscuity from hearsay, but the glow on Ingrid Bergman's face in the movie version of *For Whom the Bells Tolls* is not that of a casual experimenter in sexual relations. Nor is there anything casual about the disastrous affair that ends with death and a walk in the rain in *A Farewell to Arms*. Hemingway would have understood and approved the question, "What can you say about a 25-year-old girl who died?" It was an even younger girl who died, tragically and romantically, in Stephen Vincent Benet's *The Beginning of Wisdom* in the twenties.

Am I making the point that the quests of the twenties were serious, and the period full of Purpose? If you want to understand the will-to-persist of Golda Meir and the Israelis of four wars with the Arabs, you had better go back and read Ludwig Lewisohn's novel about the making of a Zionist in the twenties, *The Island Within*. Jay Gatsby's reach for the green light at the end of Daisy's dock may have been romantic deception, but Gatsby didn't know it. In this he was like most people in the twenties. Who, aside from Bernard Baruch and Robert Young and maybe Dwight Morrow knew that doom lurked at the end of the most purposeful decade of our disappointing century? It wasn't only Hoover who thought there would be a chicken in every pot and a car in every garage in perpetuity.

The will to achieve was, of course, mocked by critics who nonetheless had the will to create some of the most memorable of our magazines. The magazines were usually little, but they managed to bring forth a host of young writers who put as much effort into perfecting prose and verse as Boss Kettering spent in his lab to take the knock out of gasoline. Van Wyck Brooks had lamented at the beginning of the decade that the "sustained career" in American letters was an anomaly; when the decade was over the opposite had become true. Edna St. Vincent Millay, e.e. cummings, and Robert Frost in poetry produced book after book; Edmund Wilson combined criticism, reportage and the writing of intellectual history for a career that would extend through six decades. It took death to cut short Scott Fitzgerald's *The Last Tycoon*; if Scott had lived he would have found other "lasts" to dramatize. John Dos Passos, one of the world's great travel writers, worked in many genres, turning to biography of Jefferson's contemporaries when he lost the fictional urge. A critic of American business at the outset, Dos Passos learned, as others of us learned, that it takes a creative instinct to bring in a Spindletop oil gusher or to carry over the continous strip process from the rolling of cracker dough to the rolling of steel.

Van Wyck Brooks himself put together a sustained career by writing a many-volumed history of American literature. He had lamented, circa 1915, that America lacked a "usable past." Along with Vernon Parrington, another voluminous literary historian, he decided to recover for us a usable heritage. But the twenties, even before Brooks or Parrington had gotten well into the job, took the rediscovery of classic American literature to its heart. Melville scholarship goes back to Raymond Weaver and Lewis Mumford; Waldo Frank perceived the "multitudes in Whitman." Colleges, prior to the early twenties, were devoted to exhuming the eighteenth century; the twenties not only gave us a modern American



literature that is now a staple of the schools, they also rediscovered Stephen Crane, they reinterpreted Mark Twain, and they brought the reputation of such expatriates as Henry James and Ezra Pound back home.

Publishing, of course, was one of the big enterprises of the twenties; some aspiring Ph.D. should get permission, if possible, to do his thesis on the effect on literature of the Boni brothers, Albert and Charles, Horace Liveright, Pascal Covici, Ben Huebsch, Max Perkins, Harrison Smith, Donald Friede, Alfred Harcourt, Alfred and Blanche Knopf, Bennett Cerf, Richard Simon, Max Schuster, Clifton Fadiman, and a dozen others who brought the spoil of literary Europe to America and took chances on our own Glenway Wescotts, Elizabeth Madox Robertses, Dos Passoses, and Thomas Wolfes. The newcomers to publishing weren't in it for the money, but they made money, quite in the spirit of the dynamic times.

I tried to tell those journalism students something about a time when New York City had seventeen newspapers, not three. The crime news, deriving in good part from the bootleg industry, set a pattern of lurid reporting for the new tabloids and gave some substance to *The Front Page* Roaring Twenties stereotype. But the inner spirit of twenties' journalism is better explained by the character studies of newsroom types that Henry Justin Smith, the managing editor of the *Chicago Daily News*, put together in his now forgotten book, *Deadlines*. The twenties, in journalism was the age of *jeu d'esprit*: archy, the lower case cockroach, and his friend Mehitabel, the cat, dispensed a columnistic wisdom that puts our own Tom Wicker and his colleagues to the blush; and the Op. Ed. of the *New York World* did considerably more for the soul than the Op Ed. of today's *New York Times*. If the city rooms of the twenties had been totally populated by Hechtian *Front Page* types, we would have had no Paul Scott and Edgar Ansell Mowrers, no Dorothy Thompsons, no Raymond Swings and, to take a step down, no Vincent Sheeans to report the coming of Hitler. We had plenty of good journalists for export in those days. The *Times*'s Carr Van Anda, greatest of managing editors, did not skimp on crime and court reporting, but his idea of a real news beat was the Einstein formula or the opening of Tutankhamen's tomb.

I hope my evidence from literature and journalism gives the *coup de grace* to the notion that the twenties were crassly materialistic. The art and the life of the period went in tandem. You can find some commentators of the twenties who took the Lindbergh solo flight to Europe as a symbol of escape from the sordid realities of the age of Al Capone. But Lindbergh and the other fliers were actually quite in the spirit of an era that was fascinated by skills. Babe Ruth, so it is alleged, could point to the exact spot in the bleachers where he would deposit a home run, and Charles Lindbergh not only flew the Atlantic but, even more remarkable, hit Le Bourget field near Paris on the nose. The Lindbergh saga was of a piece with the Bobby Jones golf saga, or the Jack Dempsey boxing story, or Big Bill Tilden's tennis exploits. And it does not seem so strange in retrospect that Gene Tunney, the conqueror of Dempsey, beguiled himself by lecturing to college students on Shakespeare.

If the twenties had been so gawdawfully materialistic, the United States would still be dressed in mourning clothes. Does anybody remember the somber look of towns in the days when Henry Ford was offering his customers any color car they wanted "just so long as it is black"? Aesthetic considerations came in with the Chevrolet, which, more than the Stutz Bearcat, was the twenties' car. The twenties was the age of the automobile, which is enough to damn them with the Naderites of 1974. Smog is admittedly a problem, but if it hadn't been for the internal combustion engine, what sort of country would we now have? Decentralization would have been impossible: the automobile is needed not only to take people out of the city, but to haul

commuters away from the suburban train stops. Without the car the millions who now live in suburb and exurb would be piled in on top of the urban tens of millions. We would have to build skyscraper apartments to reach the moon. Imagine what New York City would be like if, in addition to accommodating its present eight million, it were forced to supply bedroom space within its confines for the people now living in Scarsdale, Bronxville, the Jersey Oranges, Connecticut's Fairfield County, and the western half of Long Island? Think it over a bit and give the twenties credit for a genuine accomplishment in putting people on wheels.

The automobile lost its market when the depression struck, and the businessman got all the blame for that. But it was the politician who made 1929 a certainty. It was the Federal Reserve Bank, a political creation, that provided the credit that eventually toppled the market. The farmer went broke because he had mortgaged his acres to supply wheat for the politicians' war in Europe; when the wheat was no longer needed he still owed his shirt and his overalls for the land he had bought on credit. The pols let the war start by their blunders, and when it was all over they made the encore of the war inevitable by saddling Germany with an unpayable debt at Versailles. What did the businessman have to do with all this? Absolutely nothing. The theory that Wall Street's loans to the Allies got the United States into the war may have some weight, but war loans certainly didn't start the guns firing in 1914.

The twenties did roar a bit; after all, they had the exuberance of a healthy animal. But as one who grew up in the Coolidge years, let me assure a generation that knows the twenties only through the stereotypes of flapper, ganster, and bathtub gin that the decade was one of high and sober seriousness. You could say that the twenties were the most creative years of the century; any tribute the nostalgia hunters pay to them will be deserved. We have been consuming their capital, in business and the arts, ever since the politicians decided the great years must not happen again. □

Uncle Sam, M.D.

ALMOST LOST against the high drama of televised impeachment and resignation has been a growing (if not yet concerted) effort to make the federal government the nation's chief health insurer. This effort is not surprising, of course. We live in what Walter Cronkite would undoubtedly call "an era of skyrocketing medical costs"—health costs have risen some five times faster than the general rate of inflation over the last decade or so—and in such situations it has become *de rigueur* for our elected representatives to devise various solutions, all of which seem to involve liberal use of the public purse. On this issue our men in Washington are following this pattern in fairly standard fashion, with some seventy-nine plans currently before Congress. At least three of these have achieved some national attention.

The two most ambitious ideas to date are the Kennedy-Mills bill, sponsored by the Senator from Massachusetts and the House Ways and Means chairman, and a proposal submitted by the White House. Both are expected to run in the $36 to $38 billion range, to be financed largely by increased taxes on employers. The chief differences between the two, predictably enough, involve the degree of government control and the extent of coverage. The Nixon plan would retain some role for private health insurance firms and would leave responsibility for a certain percentage of medical bills in the hands of individual citizens. The Kennedy proposal would eschew such remnants of a capitalistic medical system to a much greater degree: private insurance companies would exist only to provide a standard form policy written by the government, and individuals would be responsible for a much smaller portion of their personal medical expenses. (Indeed, according to a certain "Journal of Politics and the Arts," called *The New Republic*, Senator Kennedy wanted to ensure that no citizen would ever again be bothered by writing a check to a member of the medical profession; but his less enlightened brother from the South, Representative Mills, insisted on some provision for co-insurance.) The third program, sponsored by Louisiana Senator Russell Long with the support of Connecticut's Abraham Ribicoff, is considerably less ambitious in scope. Essentially, it involves an expansion of the Medicaid program to help the poor cover so-called "catastrophic" medical expenses—the major illness and/or operation that can strike suddenly and cost several thousands of dollars. The price of this exercise in humanity is much lower—only about $9 billion.

Although the nation has been concerned with weightier matters recently, I think it is appropriate that we devote a few moments of current attention to this fairly sudden push for a national health insurance program. I say it is important to discuss this now because eventually we will have have stopped worrying about the fate of Richard Nixon. When that happens, the whole pother about medical costs may well assume its proper role in the national dialogue, and intelligent discussion will be drowned in a sea of ponderous vacuities from *The New York Times*, stories in *Time* magazine complete with artsycraftsy cover, and no doubt an endless series of heart-rending features about poor souls bravely but unsuccessfully struggling to keep pace with rising health expenses. Before all this begins to happen on a grand scale, then, it would be a good idea to examine both a few of the causes of our present difficulties in the medical field, and some of the things we can expect from implementation of federal health insurance.

It is worth noting, first of all, that much of the rise in medical costs since the early 1960s can be directly traced to previous government intervention in the delivery of health services. The outstanding examples, of course, are the Medicare and Medicaid programs. Although warnings to this effect from the rich and sinister American Medical Association were ignored by all sensitive and progressive men when the battles for these programs were won, it now seems unfortunately true that massive, unilateral, government-financed expansion of the demand side of the supply-demand curve really does yield higher prices. Moreover, as is always the case when the government stands to foot the bill, incentives to control costs and to provide only necessary services are gone—further increasing expenses for private patients.

But Medicare and Medicaid are only part of the picture. The government has also contributed to the continued diversion of medical personnel from practice to research—important research, to be sure, but something of a misallocation of resources given the limited number of doctors. Any medical student in the country can tell you the importance of federal grant money, and can also tell you that it is not being used to train general practitioners. And lo and behold (to the surprise, perhaps, of sophisticates raised in the Galbraith school of economics) lowering supply also seems to have an impressive effect on prices.

Finally, state governments have also made a contribution through their licensing practices—in this case with the active complicity of the AMA. In the midst of a significant shortage of doctors, hundreds of qualified foreign physicians eager to come to the United States are prevented from practicing

medicine here because they cannot pass required medical exams. This sounds eminently reasonable, until one considers that most American M.D.'s (who would have no language problem), could probably not pass their medical boards within a few years after beginning practice—for the exams are by their very nature a comprehensive, cramming-type exercise designed for one fresh out of medical school. As the late Phillip Willkie, son of the 1940 Presidential candidate, pointed out in a courageous fight on this issue in Indiana, in many rural areas there is only one doctor for over 3,000 people. But so far, most states have not devised more realistic standards for examining foreign doctors, and another government contribution to rising medical costs persists. (Perhaps a suggestion to state legislators that they retake their bar exams every five years would shed some light in this area, but don't count on it.)

Thus, while this has hardly been an exhaustive survey (the federal government's general efforts to promote inflation, for example, have not even been touched upon), I think the point is clear that much of the responsibility for rising medical costs lies with governmental intervention. Now as we know, the government has developed, under the tutelage of many wise and thoughtful scholars and politicians, a keen sense of personal responsibility about such matters. Accordingly, it is hardly surprising that the "solution" to this problem must lie in governmental intervention on an even more massive scale, the probable results of which we may now proceed to consider.

Fortunately, the Rand Corporation has provided a study of precisely this issue, written by Drs. Joseph P. Newhouse and Charles E. Phelps, senior economists with Rand, and by Dr. William B. Schwartz, chief physician at the Tufts-New England Medical Center in Boston. Rather than dealing with any particular plan now before Congress, the report focuses on the effects of two hypothetical programs—one involving full coverage for all health costs, the other calling for payment by the patient of up to 25 percent of his medical bills. The results of this study are exactly what one would expect.

The full coverage plan, for example, would increase the amounts spent on health care from $62 billion to somewhere between $70 and $88 billion a year, and would increase the demand for ambulatory health care services by at least 75 percent. The alternative program would involve increases of $3 to $7 billion annually spent on medical care while increasing the demand for outpatient services by at least 30 percent. When one considers that Medicare and Medicaid (whose impact we considered earlier) increased the demand for such ambulatory health services by some 10 to 15 percent, one gets a better idea of the likely effects of national health insurance.

Accordingly, the Rand report informs us that "the increased demand would far exceed the current capacity of the delivery system." This, of course, would yield higher prices for either the individual or for Uncle Sam (which also means, eventually, higher prices for the individual). It would also yield longer delays in getting doctor's appointments, less time for the doctor to spend with each patient, and the loss of additional millions of man-hours consumed in unproductive waiting time. Moreover, as the report points out, the increase in outpatient coverage would not even lead to a decrease in the demand for hospital services, as claimed by both President Nixon and Senator Kennedy. Instead, experience suggests that increasing outpatient coverage actually leads to a slight increase in demand for inpatient care.

In return for this, we get a government monopoly in the sale of health insurance, and a government monopsony in the purchase of health services. We also get an increase in taxes; for lest anyone be fooled, "employer taxes" translate into lower paychecks and/or higher prices, every time. Finally, we lose one more sphere of our lives to the firm control of the federal government.

All this is not to say that the agitation for federal health insurance is not well motivated; the push for such programs always is. But before we take another step in our sometimes headlong rush to match the social sensitivity of our British and Swedish brethren, it would be good for Congress and the Administration to realize finally that the federal government cannot usher in the millennium by fiat. The problem in medical care is a shortage in capacity in the delivery area, seriously aggravated by quantum jumps in demand brought on by government intermeddling. To think that saying "Let the government pay for it" will lead to solutions in this area is not only naive, but promises to further exacerbate an already serious problem. □

E. C. Pasour, Jr.

The Illusion of Common Cause

"I will not cater to special interests but will serve the people."

MOST CANDIDATES running for public office would subscribe to this campaign motto. Today, it is the "in thing" to be against actions which favor special interests and to favor actions which promote the common good. There is even now a national organization to lobby for common causes.

What is a common cause? The obvious answer would appear to be that it is any action which benefits everyone in society. This sounds good until the statement is subjected to closer scrutiny. There are few, if any, "common causes." Virtually every action taken by government benefits some people and harms others. Indeed, the accommodation of conflicting interests is an inherent role of government at any level.

Consider federal policies such as agricultural programs, minimum wage legislation, oil import quotas, welfare programs, and tax laws. In the case of changes in any of these programs, some people gain while others lose. This point was graphically illustrated in January 1973 from the losers' standpoint when budget cutbacks were proposed in a number of government programs. The reaction to the cutbacks was virtually the same whether the cutbacks were in subsidies for agriculture, REA loans, housing, research, or welfare programs.

In the case of agricultural price support programs involving production controls, for example, an initial effect of these programs was to increase the cost of food to the consumer. At the same time, the producers who were granted the initial production rights received a windfall gain. The termination of these programs would impose losses on current holders of production rights and reduce the cost of food to consumers.

Two points in connection with such programs should be made. First, as illustrated by the previous example, some people lose and some people gain when such programs are instituted or abolished or changed significantly. Second, the impact of the program cannot necessarily be determined by reading the statute or enabling legislation. The impact of the agricultural programs, minimum wage legislation, and various regulatory agencies has often been much different from that envisaged by the framers of the legislation.

One implication is that there is no way to determine what actions are in "the public interest" except through the collective choice process. All public policy issues involve the twin welfare concepts of efficiency and equity. One can evaluate particular policies from the standpoint of efficiency and in many cases determine the most efficient course of action to follow (in terms of dollar cost). When one considers equity, however, no such clear-cut answer is likely to appear. Since some people lose and some gain as a result of almost every public policy we have no way to compare these gains and losses objectively. Thus, we are left with the conclusion that governmental decisions must be assessed in terms of the extent to which the collective choice process reflects individual preferences and desires in some aggregative form.

In many cases, the actual impact of a particular policy (as indicated above) is greatly different from that predicted when the legislation was enacted. This appears to be a fairly clear-cut example of a failure of the collective choice process. In the examples cited above (and in others discussed below), a public policy may actually aggravate the condition it was proposed to alleviate. In such cases, the implication for governmental policy is straightforward. If a public policy has an effect which is antithetical to that desired by the people, one can quite unequivocally call it a bad public policy at least to the extent that the goal of the collective choice process is to reflect aggregative preferences and desires.

From a practical standpoint, then, we can forget the common causes. The "common cause" touchstone provides little help in assessing the desirability of alternative policies. The more relevant question in assessing the desirability of any policy is to determine: (1) which groups will be affected by the policy, and (2) what the effects on different groups are likely to be. Even then, the only way to determine whether a proposed policy is in the public interest is through the collective choice process.

The dominant view of conventional wisdom appears to be that some groups (e.g., public school teachers) promoting policies to enhance their own self-interests are justified in doing so while other groups (e.g., the oil industry) are not justified. Most people undoubtedly feel that some groups are more deserving of public support than other groups. But this does not vitiate the basic motive of either group, *viz.*, to enhance its own self-interest. The reaction to government budget cutbacks in virtually any area stems from the use of government by special interest groups to further their own interests.

What *should* motivate the behavior of the individual? The idealistic view is that any individual or special interest group should act in the "public interest" rather than to enhance its own self-interest. This approach, however, often tends to be self-defeating.

First, if a particular individual or group attempts to subordinate self-interest and follow the public interest, the individual or group would seldom know the appropriate action to take. Since there is no "common cause" but instead a multitude of competing special interests, an individual has no way to divine the public interest unilaterally. This is as true for the government bureaucrat as it is for any other citizen.

In one sense, at least, selfish acts freely exercised will lead to public benefits. This is the "Invisible Hand" doctrine of Adam Smith. "By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it." This does not mean, of course, that people should be motivated solely by selfish interests. It does mean that if an individual attempts to sacrifice his own interests to some higher social responsibility, the result may well be different from that anticipated.

In illustrating this point, consider the example of a farmer using chemical fertilizers. Recently made aware of the harmful side effects of chemical fertilizers in the form of stream pollution, an individual farmer decides to restrict (or discontinue) his use of these fertilizer materials. The effect of using organic fertilizers results in increased costs (and perhaps lower yields). One farmer's output will not affect product price. Thus, the effect of his attempting to follow what he conceives as his "social responsibility" results in a large decrease in net returns, a loss in his competitive position and, for the marginal producer, bankruptcy.

In addition, if the participants by their actions do not accurately reflect their own wishes, the market loses its ability to transmit accurate signals from consumers to producers. In cases such as the example just illustrated, where one producer or consumer (under competitive conditions) unilaterally attempts to follow his "social responsibility" rather than his private interest, neither public nor private interest is likely to be served.

The view expressed here does not mean that ideals and values held by people are unimportant. However, neither the market nor the collective choice process can be relied upon to assure that people's aspirations are noble. At best, both the market and the political process can help people achieve self-realization of their preferences. Unless the actions and ideas of people are constrained and influenced by morality and religion, self-realization of these preferences may well be incompatible with the preservation of a free society. Persons concerned with maintaining a stable free society must be concerned about the effect of selfish acts freely exercised by individuals who hold nihilistic destructive preferences which would subvert or abolish that kind of society. Thus, clearly not all selfish acts lead to public benefits or are consistent with the "Invisible Hand" doctrine referred to above. The categorization of selfish acts depending upon whether such acts are or are not consistent with the "Invisible Hand" doctrine appears to be a fruitful area for further study.

A second reason why attempts to convince individuals to act in the "public interest" are not likely to be successful arises from the fact that most individuals, as revealed by their actions, are motivated to a great extent by self-interest. That is, most of us (except within our families) are motivated largely by fairly narrow selfish goals. The amount of resources we are willing to devote to charitable causes is much less than the amount we spend to achieve selfish goals. It appears extremely unlikely that individuals or groups will abandon self-interest as a dominant motive even when faced with a large amount of exhortation to do so. Thus, the self-interest motive appears likely to continue as a good predictor of individual behavior in the private and public sectors.

What is the policy implication of the viewpoint that self-interest is a good predictor of behavior? Policies should be formulated with the expectation that individuals or groups will promote policies with their own self-interest in mind. The system of rewards and incentives must not be inconsistent with the outcome desired. In the case of regulatory agencies, for example, George Stigler has demonstrated that regulatory bodies in general tend to be subservient to the industry being regulated. However, this is an understandable and a predictable outcome when the major support for a regulatory agency comes from the particular industry being regulated. In the case of occupational licensing, too, the pressure to "protect the public," almost always comes from members of the industry for which licensing is proposed.

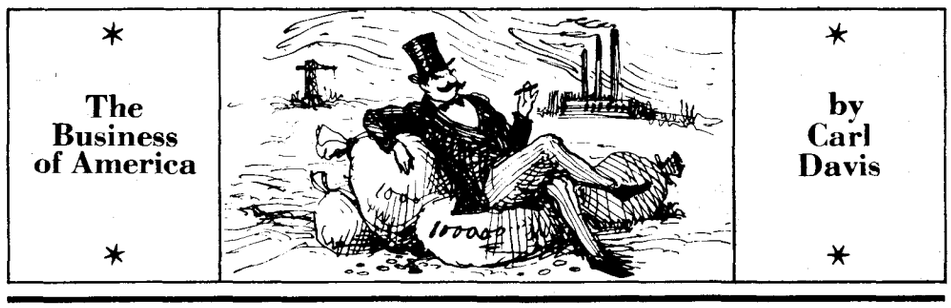
It is not surprising under these conditions that the clientele supposedly being protected by the legislation, eventually winds up paying more *because of* the legislation. Recent work suggests that this has been the case for the Federal Aviation Authority; the Interstate Commerce Commission; oil import quotas; and licensing of lawyers, barbers, and many other groups. In view of past experiences with regulatory agencies to promote the interests of the "public-at-large," one certainly has ample grounds for viewing new legislation of a similar kind with a critical eye.

Recent "consumer legislation" such as "Truth-in-Lending," "Unit-Pricing," and auto safety devices, is slightly different in that it has been championed by third-party activists instead of by the industry being regulated. Providing additional information or reducing risk to the consumer, though beneficial, can only be achieved at an increase in cost. Another effect of much consumer legislation, often ignored, is the decrease in freedom of any individual to select the amount of risk (and associated cost) which he deems most desirable. Many people, for example, will prefer the lower cost of a smaller car even though the risk of bodily injury is higher. Thus, since the consumer ultimately pays the bill, the costs of "consumerism" as weighed by the consumer will outweigh the benefits for many consumers. The tragedy is that such consumer legislation is often sold to the public by claiming either that the costs are negligible or that "big business" will be forced to pay the bill.

In conclusion, one should not expect

any particular government policy to benefit the public-at-large, *i.e.*, to be a "common cause." All important government policies benefit some individuals and groups while harming others. There is no way to compare these gains and losses objectively. Thus, the desirability of any public policy must be determined through the collective choice process.

One should expect individuals and groups to attempt to use the coercive power of government to enhance their own self-interest whether social, political, or economic. Such policies may be (and often are) sold under the guise of a common cause, *i.e.*, as being in the interest of the public-at-large. The desire or hope of the sponsor of a particular policy even if altruisitic instead of venal, however, is not sufficient to ensure that the cause is common, *i.e.*, that everyone will benefit. Indeed such desire is not even sufficient to ensure that a particular policy will have the outcome visualized by its proponents. As a latter day follower of Adam Smith has stated, if wishes were horses, we would all be wise to own stock in a harness factory. □



Political Freedom and Economic Responsibility

IT IS LITTLE understood that economic freedom—the freedom to control the use of capital—and political freedom are intimately connected, that a society which gives up its economic freedom to the government, in the end will have its political freedom taken from it by the same government. I say this is little understood because it seems today, that people increasingly feel it possible for a society to adopt the essential features of Russian or Communist Chinese economic arrangements while preserving the essential features of Western democratic political arrangements. While I am deeply committed to the preservation of private economic freedom as a desirable end in itself, I am equally committed to the kind of political freedom most of us in the Western world enjoy. In my understanding, it is impossible to have that political freedom without having private economic freedom as well.

To prove my point, I ask you to think for a moment of the tremendous coercive power of any government which controls all of a society's capital, thereby controlling all employment and, of course, all the universities and all the news media. If the army does not resist it, such a government can silence those who disagree with it and enforce absolute conformity to its wishes, whatever they may be, through the power it has over each person's ability to earn a living.

On the other hand, if a significant proportion of economic power is kept in separate hands from political power, each can serve as a check upon the other.

"[An] example of the role of [private economic power] in preserving political freedom," Milton Friedman has written, "was revealed in our experience with McCarthyism. Entirely aside from the substantive issues involved, and the merits of the charges made, what protection did individuals, and in particular government employees, have against irresponsible accusations and probings into matters that it went against their conscience to reveal? Their appeal to the Fifth Amendment would have been a hollow mockery without an alternative to government employment.

"Their fundamental protection was the existence of a private market economy in which they could earn a living . . . .The protection was not absolute. Many potential private employers were, rightly or wrongly, averse to hiring those pilloried. It may well be that there was far less justification for the costs imposed on many of the people involved than for the costs generally imposed on people who advocate unpopular causes. But the important point is that the costs were limited and not prohibitive, as they would have been if government employment had been the only possibility."

Therefore, unless one wishes to live in a society in which the governed have no freedom at all, it seems self-evident that one should wish to keep as much economic power as possible in private hands.

But one cannot stop there. Having thus provided an essential check on abuses of political power, a free society must use its political power to provide checks on possible abuses of privately held economic power. In most of the Western world, the competitive nature of the free market often provides a check on such abuses. For example, the existence of several competitors in any given economic market restricts any one firm from unreasonably raising the price or lowering the quality of its products, for to do so would be to invite its customers to buy its competitors' products. In my view, the following are also necessary checks on privately held economic power: anti trust laws, to preserve the competitive nature of as many economic markets as possible, thereby preventing the accretion of too much economic power to any one individual or collection of individuals; regulation of monopolies, to prevent the exploitation of markets in which, for one reason or another, it is inadvisable for there to be competition; and fair employment and health and safety laws, to prevent private employers from abusing the economic power they have over their employees.

In spite of these market and political restraints, those who hold private economic power, that is to say businessmen, will always be able to abuse it somewhat. And unfortunately, some, perhaps many businessmen today, either through indifference or malice, continue to abuse the economic power they have over others while reaping for themselves the highest economic rewards. These businessmen should be made to understand that if, by their example, such abuses become widespread, they run the risk of having their economic freedom stripped from them and of bringing our private free market system crashing down around our ears—delivering us, in all likelihood, into the uncomfortable position I described earlier, the position of having both political and economic power concentrated in the government.

I say this for two reasons, first, because it seems inconceivable that, in a democratic society, a minority, the employers, will for long be allowed to mistreat the majority, the employed; and second, because I think it unlikely that the majority will long tolerate a system which distributes the greatest economic rewards to a minority containing a significant number of people who seem lacking in moral fiber.

Father John Courtney Murray wrote the following about the responsibilities of men who enjoy political freedom. I think his words apply equally well to the responsibilities of men who exercise economic power:

"They must understand, in Acton's phrase, that freedom is 'not the power of doing what we like, but the right of being able to do what we ought'. . . . In this sense, [the exercise of freedom] is a spiritual and moral enterprise. And its success depends upon the virtue of the people who undertake it. Men who would be . . . free must discipline themselves. Likewise, institutions which would pretend to be free with a human freedom must in their workings be governed from within and made to serve the ends of virtue."

"My reading of history," Irving Kris-

tol has written, "is that, in the same way as men cannot for long tolerate a sense of spiritual meaninglessness in their individual lives, so they cannot for long accept a society in which power, privilege, and property are not distributed according to some morally meaningful criteria."

The point, I think, is that, as a practical matter, those individual freedoms and privileges which are exercised responsibly have the best chance of enduring. On the other hand, those individual freedoms and privileges which are abused will, in all likelihood, be taken away.

But, as Father Murray indicated, there are more than just practical considerations involved, more than just practical reasons why businessmen should act virtuously. Another more fundamental and compelling reason is set forth in the following terrifying yet beautiful paragraph written by C.S. Lewis:

"It may happen to any of us at any moment. In the twinkling of an eye, in a time too small to be measured, and in any place, all that seems to divide us from God can flee away, vanish leaving us naked before Him, like the first man, like the only man, as if nothing but He and I existed. And since that contact cannot be avoided for long, and since it means either bliss or horror, the business of life is to learn to like it. *That* is the first and great commandment." □

Douglas W. Cooper

On Entering a Dark Age

LIGHTS WENT OUT all over the country last spring and the once dazzling smiles of many American cities looked like the grin of a Brand X toothpaste user who lost a bare knuckle boxing match. Foreshadowing the advent of a second Dark Age?

Geoscientists assure us they could discern early the onset of another Ice Age. Socioscientists, watchers and weighers of the world's well-being, cannot be similarly relied upon to warn us of an imminent Dark Age . . . a period like the five hundred years between the fall of Rome and the rise of feudalism, cities and commerce. Too many in the social sciences are blind believers in Progress. These worshippers of the New, our neoterics, applaud the New Man in the Making in Mao's China just as their addlepated antecedents praised Stalin's socialist paradise in the days when the New Socialist Man was being created in the ashes of the purges. No, we have to assess our trends without such help.

Albert Jay Nock, the great libertarian essayist, considered writing an essay on how one could know he was entering a Dark Age. Things look better some days, some decades, and worse others. How can one tell? Perhaps Nock would have been willing to try if alive today. We need men like Nock, a man who once voted for the long-dead Jefferson Davis on the grounds "that if we can't have a man who amounts to anything, by all means let's have a first-class corpse." It certainly seems we are in a Malthusian bind: our problems grow in geometric progression, our solutions arithmetically.

The public has learned to vote itself money from the treasury, as Tocqueville warned we would. Pressure-group warfare has resulted. Big money is to be made if certain government decisions can be turned to one's advantage, and a market for those favors has developed far beyond the control of campaign spending laws. Our money is eroding. Government cheats the people by financing its deficits with inflation and the people cheat the government by evading taxes. Government controls begin to rival those of France's *ancien regime*, with similar results. "Smart money" invests not in enterprise, but in gold, silver, and Swiss francs in Swiss banks. But the coalition of the greedy and envious would rather stifle creativity than endure the obscenity of the success of the creative minority.

If history is "the sound of hobnailed boots trampling up, up, up, and silken slippers shuffling down, down, down," we are due to hear more shuffling at home and more trampling from afar. The United States was victorious in World Wars I and II, stalemated in Korea; we resigned in Viet Nam and we pressured our Israeli allies to quit in the Middle East. The failure to defend the peripheries is a problem we share with Rome in decline. Naval chief Admiral Zumwalt tells us our navy cannot fulfill its mission, but Russia's can. Our nuclear arsenal goes from "massive superiority" to "parity" to "sufficiency," while not-so-mighty France reads between the lines and makes her own, just in case. Why have Russian forces in Europe increased as NATO's diminished? They are making boots in Minsk and slippers in Massachusetts . . . so much for "Pax Americana."

We are at war even now, at war with our criminal class. The criminal jungle threatens to engulf our cities, as the crime statistics indicate, and the crime stats tell only part of the story: we make no entry for the moments of fear increasingly felt by our city dwellers. Justice has degenerated into a game between lawyers, to the applause of the intellectuals who want none jailed but Nixon, Ehrlichman, Mitchell, and Haldeman.

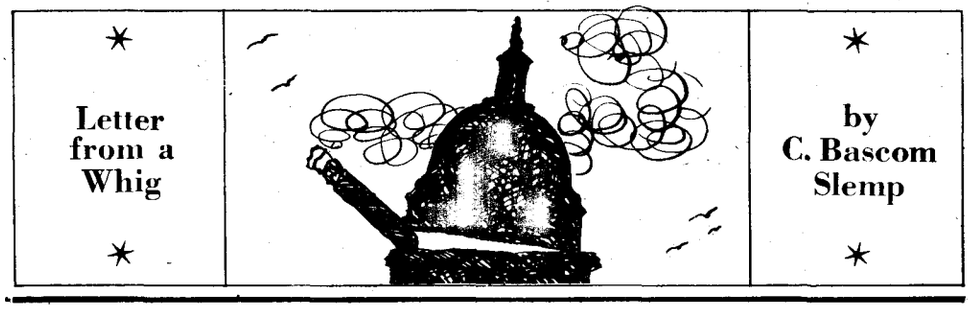
The Christian fundamentalists tell us that it has been a downhill slide since the Fall. I think Emerson is more nearly right, civilization "recedes as fast on one side as it gains on another," but the Dewey-eyed apostles of ineluctable progress are furthest from the truth and much more hazardous to our welfare than the pessimists. The would-be social engineers are more likely to gum up the works than are the salvation seekers.

There are two schools of thought among the believers in the historical inevitability of progress. Socialist opportunists claim our difficulties are inherent in capitalism, a necessary but unpleasant stretch on the road to Utopia. Thus, John Kenneth Galbraith now finds socialism necessary to enable us to share scarcity; previously he advocated socialism because we were too affluent. But our Panglossians assert our problems are really blessings in disguise, not problems at all, and thus not contradictions to their belief in the ever-upward spiral. The cockeyed optimists seem to predominate: As the jungle engulfs civilization, they rejoice in "the greening." As factories shut down, they delight in the cleaner air. Are the lights dimming? That lessens the glare. Are nitwits getting Ph.D.'s? Keeps 'em off the streets. Does *The Exorcist* uplift only meals? Onward, Naturalism! They hope America's impotence will bring humility. Humiliation is more likely. Afraid to face deterioration, they like the "informality" of non-art, non-manners, and nonsense.

On Madison Avenue they might put it this way: We've put the "cult" into culture and taken the "civil" out of civilization. Tom Wolfe and Duncan Williams sized up our modern culture and found it lacking; you and I can gauge civility for ourselves. Groups of people are still treated gingerly, but individuals fare less well. We absorbed from Freud a picture of man as neurosis-ridden. Darwin convinced us we are animals. The egalitarian zeitgeist accords us the equality of cipherdom. Leftist ideologues on the make at Berkeley and elsewhere found that filthy speech and "non-violent" coercion could take advantage of the manners of moderate Americans to gain ends difficult to achieve otherwise. Fifty foul-mouthed pickets were as effective in keeping us from school or job as would have been a few brutish storm-troopers with guns. Gentility was taken advantage of, so "hanging tough" has replaced it. Insolence abounds, as well. Rodney Dangerfield isn't the only one who "don't get no respect." Those who work resent their bosses and customers. Those on the dole sneer at the boobs who labor.

Only powerful groups have clout now. We are inured to the plights of individuals, but like cut flowers retain enough vitality, moral vitality, to wince at the treatment of certain minorities, and even that response is limited: Russian Jews get help and sympathy, Chinese Christians go unaided, unlamented.

From the ups and downs, I discern a downward trend. More government, less financial stability and growth, declining international influence, a more perverse culture, even less civility. Chicken Little was pretty close to the mark. Even so, a remnant will endure. Those who understand what is happening and who cut their dependence upon other men and society can repair to the monasteries of their minds. To the philosophic and resourceful, the decline need not be tragic. *Sauve qui peut.* □



Needed—A Living Former President

Editor's Note: From Mr. Slemp's first paragraph you will see that he wrote his column before Mr. Nixon actually did resign, but from subsequent paragraphs it becomes obvious that Mr. Slemp's perceptions were remarkably prescient and are enduringly instructive.

(Washington)—RECOGNIZING THAT the death of Lyndon Johnson has left the Nation without a living former President for the longest period in the century, many Americans have come to believe that Mr. Nixon, because of his concern for history and his strong interest in maintaining tradition, should resign so that he can fill the position of Living Former President as promptly as possible. Insensitive to these requests, Mr. Nixon, to date, has rebuffed any suggestion of resignation. Not to be outdone, however, the "Committee for a Living Former President" has initiated impeachment proceedings to see whether Mr. Nixon is indeed suited to become our only Living Former President.

Is Mr. Nixon worthy of this position? Apparently even some of Mr. Nixon's most long-standing critics think he is. More than one such critic introduced legislation urging impeachment some two years ago. Indeed, those critics who have formed the nucleus of the "Committee for a Living Former President" have consistently seemed to argue that Nixon's ascendency to the Presidency—in and of itself—was ground enough for impeachment.

"Devoted Partisans All"

When the House Judiciary Committee finally voted on the articles of impeachment, the moment while historic, was paradoxically also anticlimatic. The three articles approved by the Committee pertained to the Watergate cover-up, the misuse of power, and the defiance of Committee subpoenas. Not receiving Committee approval were the proposed articles pertaining to the bombing of Cambodia and the alleged tax fraud.

It will now fall to the House of Representatives to decide whether Mr. Nixon should be impeached on any of the three charges. The charges seem secondary, and almost tertiary, after the weeks, months—and yes—even years of Watergate.

Scandal after scandal erupted in the headlines of *The Washington Post, The New York Times and The Los Angeles Times*, picked up by network TV and local newspapers; the Nation saw the inner-workings of a Presidential Administration as never before.

The sight was not pretty!

Nixon's political adversaries and the national media became the phlebotomists. *Abbattoir*, the country expected it: the blood-letting could have only one end.

The House and Senate will soon decide whether or not grounds for impeachment exist. Nevertheless, a nagging question continues to persist: To what degree did long-standing anti-Nixon sentiment influence the impeachment bandwagon? Is the impeachment assault on Nixon the outgrowth of personal enmity, ideological hatred, and just plain partisan politics? There can, of course, be no simple response. But while not excusing Nixon, there can be no doubt that he is the victim of a double standard; he has received a scrutiny no other President has been subjected to, or most likely, ever will again.

The American public has experienced the Theater of the Absurd. All presidents have had their character flaws, Nixon not excepted. But in the partisan emotion of the current impeachment debate, previous presidents are being eulogized to point out Nixon's deficiencies. This trend was carried to a ridiculous extreme in a recent series of articles carried by the *Washington Post*. The series portrayed the reminiscences of aides to earlier White House incumbents, from FDR through Johnson. "Devoted partisans all," wrote *The Post* of the respective Administration aides; their articles provided the George Washington never-tell-a-lie syndrome of selective memory and history.

Of FDR we learn that he ruled the White House with "undiluted charm." Beyond that, writes former Roosevelt associate James Rowe, "I cannot ever remember hearing [Roosevelt] swear."

We are told that Truman was "serious about his family and friends, old fashioned in personal ethics," and that his reaction to a West Point cheating scandal was "husky-voiced and moist-eyed." Truman "could not comprehend how young men in whom such trust had been placed would violate a solemn oath."

On the subject of the press, former Truman aide, George Elsey, writes: "Reporters were Truman's friends . . . . He liked their straightforward no-nonsense lack of obsequiousness."

Sentimental, touching—a distorted picture—yes; the warmth of these reflections notwithstanding, who yet has met an obsequious reporter?

Emmett John Hughes's memories of the Eisenhower White House, while not intended as such, were possibly the least flattering of the reminiscences in the series. The Eisenhower Oval Office, writes Hughes, was divorced from the country's "intellectual community"; there was no hospitality for "creative or innovative ideas." The logical derivative of the environment was that any idea implanted in Eisenhower's White House would have withered out of loneliness; and in consequence there was a "personal serenity in the Oval Office;" which reflected smug "confidence."

As we move to the sixties the self-serving quality of the reminiscences becomes even more apparent, and the critique of Nixon takes on malicious tones. Kennedy, says former aide Pierre Salinger, "was not above using a little profanity," but according to Salinger he used it only "to illustrate or underline a point." Former Johnson assistant Joseph Califano, goes even further than Salinger on the mythical journey of understatement and predilective reality. "It is doubtful," writes Califano, "that any Presidents [*sic*] in our history would sound like Richard Nixon [possibly so] . . . . This is not to say that other Presidents—Lyndon Baines Johnson included—never took the name of the Lord in vain. . . . No one who worked for Lyndon Johnson would call him a Saint [It's hard to believe, isn't it?] . . . . His earthy language almost invariably was part of a story that drove home a point. It was not, as Nixon's is, the language of a teenage

tough who thinks the frequent use of profanity and Anglo expletives as adjectives demonstrate machismo [*sic*]."

According to Califano (and as difficult as this may be for readers of *The Alternative* to accept), Johnson could even get angry at his opposition. "And there were people Johnson did not like. To say he was no fan of Robert Kennedy would be the understatement of his Administration."

What these articles are supposed to illustrate, presumably, is that Mr. Nixon is not serious about his family and friends, that he is lacking in old-fashioned personal ethics, and that he has not mastered the art of swearing perfected by his predecessors. These articles create a fairy-tale past, a past that was supposedly simpler than the present, and they add momentum to the already pervasive disillusionment and disgust with the Nixon White House.

"Newsbreak of the Century?"

Kitty Kelley recently wrote an article for the *Washingtonian* magazine on the "All-American Boy"—Delaware's freshman Democrat Senator, Joseph Biden. Senator Biden, a virtual unknown in Delaware politics, defeated sixty-three-year-old Republican incumbent Caleb Boggs in the 1972 elections.

According to Kelley, Boggs had wanted to retire but "Nixon persuaded him to run for a third term, suggesting that he resign after a year. Then Nixon planned to appoint Congressman Pierre DuPont on the Republican side of the aisle. Biden spoiled the game plan (by defeating Boggs) in 1972."

In fact, the Nixon White House has never shown any party loyalty towards GOP candidates. In fact, Nixon rejected Boggs's request for personal support. In fact, no president can make a Senate appointment. In fact, even if Nixon could have made the appointment, he would not have wanted DuPont appointed (DuPont has never been one of the White House's "regular fellas"). And in fact, if Boggs had retired, DuPont undoubtedly would have run a more efficient campaign against Biden than Boggs did. Surely, Miss Kelley's article was less than incisive.

In a letter to the editor on this very article, one incensed reader wrote:

"Kitty Kelley has scored the newsbreak of the century. The President planned to resign and become Governor of Delaware! Perhaps this is the real Watergate truth.

"It must be. There is no other way he could appoint anyone to the U.S. Senate from Delaware.

"What is her source for this 'game plan?' Senator Biden? *Deep Throat*? The Constitution? Her willingness to believe anything about the President?"

Miss Kelley's article brings to mind Jefferson's observation that women's tender breasts were never meant for political convulsions. But that distinction undoubtedly does not belong to women alone, as *The Washington Post*'s series on presidential reminiscences written by men all too clearly illustrates.

Mr. Nixon may well be impeached. He may deserve to be impeached. But unless our motives are true, Mr. Nixon will not be the greatest victim in this national tragedy. □

James Grant

How to Read Newsweek

(Baltimore) JOURNALISM IS AN inherently imperfect craft. To write on deadline is to understand the elusiveness of truth. There is never enough time or knowledge, it seems. Facts, the journalist's bane and glory, pass from source to reporter to editor, from one sieve to the next, and so to the printed page.

Competence is the newsman's standard, not perfection, and the most demanding test of competence is convincing those who know first-hand. In the reader's eye, truth is indivisible. If a story about Baltimore is wrong, how can a Baltimorean believe what he reads about Watergate? And when gross inaccuracy is joined by willful distortion, a journal no longer deserves to be read.

For these sound if provincial reasons, I have renounced *Newsweek* magazine. An account of the two-week strike by Baltimore municipal workers (July 1-15) was so sensationalized that it missed the point of what really happened here. And last year, in another article referring to Maryland, *Newsweek* deliberately distorted the truth. Willful distortion is a grave charge to make against a journal that purportedly deals in fact, yet *Newsweek* itself admits the truth of the charge.

That story, which appeared on April 30, 1973, concerned male prostitution and included the following sentences: *"One Maryland politician who had run for office on a law and order platform was collared recently while prowling for boys in the Times Square area. 'He once promised to build a boys' home in his state,' recalls Manhattan patrolman Anthony Mercaldi. . ."*

It was with intense disappointment that *The Sun* (Baltimore) discovered the truth. The hapless pederast, alas, was not in fact from Maryland. As *Newsweek* explained it, the story's authors felt bound to protect the politician's identity, so they tacked the name Maryland to his. Why Maryland? Why any state? *Newsweek* says it does not know. Perhaps the reporters thought the Free State so corrupt that no one would notice.

"It was the wrong thing to do," Hal Bruno, *Newsweek*'s deputy bureau chief in Washington, conceded recently. "A mistake was made. A reporter and writer chose the wrong means to protect a confidential source. If they had just said 'a politician' and let it go at that, it would have been okay. I don't think it was done for a malicious reason," he added. "The people responsible for this have had their error pointed out to them and have been warned it had better not happen again."

Lou Panos, a Baltimore *Evening Sun* columnist who first exposed the story, reported then that an explanation "is expected to be printed in the next issue in the form of an editor's note replying to a letter from a reader." The correction never appeared. Mr. Bruno pointed out that *Newsweek* confessed its sins to inquiring reporters as soon as the article ran. The confessions, however, were evidently offered sotto voce. Mr. Bruno, prior to my call and his own check with New York, had never heard of the incident.

Newsweek's most recent assault on Maryland was its story ("The Dump"; July 22) on the Baltimore police and garbage strike. Accompanying the article was a dramatic picture of Negroes looting a store.

"It was a city under siege," Newsweek began. *"Sprawling heaps of garbage sent a sickening stench into the humid midsummer air; the city's jails and schools were undermanned; the public-health officer warned of an outbreak of bubonic plague; the streets were safe only for muggers, looters and the ever-burgeoning population of rats. And for the crisis-weary residents of Baltimore, there was no end in sight last week."*

There was no siege, of course. Garbage accumulated in parts of the city, but private enterprise and the public's cooperation kept much of Baltimore clean. *"Sprawling heaps of garbage,"* which suggests a city awash in swill, is the phrase of an unbridled imagination. A week before *Newsweek* went to press, the public-health officer, Dr. Robert E. Farber, ruled out the near-term possibility of plague. Indeed, no sickness has been directly linked to the strike. The claim *"the streets were safe only for looters, muggers and the ever-burgeoning population of rats"* is a fabrication. It might be noted, too, that the gestation period for rats is twenty-five days; the strike lasted only two weeks.

"A strike by some of the city's sanitationmen started it all three weeks ago, after Mayor William D. Schaefer declared wage negotiations had reached the bottom line," the story continued. *"The city had offered a wage increase of 5.5 percent, but it wasn't enough—and last week the garbage was piled everywhere. The city coped for a while: a volunteer squad of several hundred white-collar*

trash men supplemented private haulers, and the remaining heaps were sprayed with chlorine to keep the smell down and the rats away. But in last week's soaring temperatures, tempers also ran high; radical unionists spoke of 'shutting down the whole goddam city to get our demands,' and a protest rally at city hall triggered twelve arrests by policemen with nightsticks flailing."

Newsweek's account of the initial walk-out is inaccurate and incomplete. The mayor did not declare that negotiations had reached *"the bottom line."* On June 30, the day before the garbage men bolted, Local 44 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFL-CIO) voted to accept a one-year contract providing wage increases of 5½ percent. That vote bound every union member, including the sanitation men. The garbage, of course, was not *"piled everywhere."* Nor did the city's resistance perceptibly weaken as the strike wore on. *Newsweek*, however, did spell Mayor Schaefer's name correctly.

"The next night," Newsweek concluded, *"police themselves went on strike for higher pay. Even though about half the force remained on duty, looting and vandalism broke out all over the city, police bands were jammed by calls, one suspected looter was killed by a nonstriking policeman and on Friday state police had to be called in to quell an outbreak of racial violence. Jail guards, city zoo keepers, and janitors for the public schools were refusing to cross the growing number of picket lines.*

" 'This city will go crazy,' said one East Baltimore woman. 'It's just about crazy now.' Sanity returned at the weekend, with tentative settlements of both strikes. But Baltimore was a shaken city, and a pall of smoke from the burning garbage still hung over the sweltering streets."

Newsweek again refused to qualify its claims. Looting and vandalism did erupt after news spread of the police walk-out, but the damage was localized. (That *"about half the force remained on duty"* seems to have been true for the first night of the police strike.) In two hours of reporting that night for *The Sun*, I did not see a single act of looting. Most of Baltimore, including the downtown business district, was left unscathed. State police, who were called in as a show of force, assisted in quelling racial trouble (in an area that had experienced it long before the police strike). They were not, however, summoned specifically for that assignment.

"Sanity returned at the weekend," a phrase which appears in the final paragraph, directly contradicts the last sentence in the second paragraph: *"And for the crisis-weary residents of Baltimore, there was no end in sight last week."* The *"East Baltimore woman" Newsweek* quoted is probably a woman who happened to be standing on East Baltimore street. That, at least, is how the same quotation appeared in *The Sun*.

Baltimore was undoubtedly a shaken city as the strike reached a close. It was also a proud city, having survived and functioned for two weeks in the absence of key government services. "The people of Baltimore would not let our city become paralyzed," proclaimed Mayor Schaefer, and the mayor was right.

Newsweek's Mr. Bruno, who that week directed the magazine's reporting in Maryland, agreed that the story, in places, was exaggerated. "In parts there should have been some qualifying words," he said, "but I'm not prepared to agree that it was all that inaccurate." *Newsweek* relied on a "stringer," a part-time correspondent in Baltimore, for most of its information on the strike. That stringer, Mr. Bruno said, neglected to call the magazine prior to deadline in order to check the finished story against the facts he submitted. To this charge, the stringer—one of *The Sun*'s best reporters—pleads guilty.

That helps explain some of the errors. But, it does not explain why *Newsweek* proceeded so boldly with information it had not been able to verify. A magazine does not rise or fall on two articles. Yet within eighteen months, two *Newsweek* stories I had firsthand knowledge about turned out to be false; one of them was intended that way. These might have been flukes, but how can we be sure? □

Book Review

The Coming of Post-Industrial Society

A Venture in Social Forecasting

by Daniel Bell
Basic Books $12.50

IN THIS VOLUME, prodigiously documented and running well over five hundred pages, Professor Bell presents his view of an emerging post-industrial society. Despite the sometimes awkward nomenclature (whereby the dominant concepts of a social organization are turned into its "axial principles," the organization itself into an "axial structure," and the concluding chapter into a "coda"), and even despite the massive erudition present on every page, the work can be thematically reduced to the following summary. At present, Western society—in anticipation of other parts of the world—is making a transition from an industrially-based to a technocratically-oriented way of life. Basic to this changing reality are at least five developments which have come to shape our present economic and social situation. One is the movement from a "goods" to a "services" economy: a trend most dramatically in evidence in the United States where one half of the work force will soon be employed in technical and professional jobs.

This change has both reflected and encouraged respect for the professions, whose members have already surpassed the business community in terms of social prestige. The reason for this fact (witness, for instance, the expanding college enrollments) is related to the growing complexity of both modern technology and social problems. Because of the intricacy of problem-solving, a special emphasis has now been placed on theoretical knowledge, the particular forte of an increasingly self-confident class of technical experts and the source for future social innovation. As the government, in response to changing cultural demands, has turned to this technocracy for advice, it has invested universities and foundations with political as well as intellectual significance. Educators have been summoned to formulate national policies, while "brain trusts" have become a necessity, and no longer merely an ornament, for the state.

Bell adduces, in addition to a welter of statistics, some sound empirical evidence in defense of his thesis. He discusses the waning of class conflict in America in its traditional form of an almost ritualized confrontation between labor and management. The social tension once so basic to middle-class industrial society, has by now been overshadowed by cultural and generational conflicts, in which the sides are drawn along ideological, and no longer economic lines. What relationship, if any, do the bearers of the counter-culture have to the proletariat that Marx describes in his books? Or, what is the connection of psychedelic drugs and tarot cards to a working-class movement? Bell argues rather cogently that reality has been thrice redefined in Western life: once as nature, next as technique, and finally as the social world. If inflationary rates are at all indicative (as most economists believe they are) of the relative needs experienced by a particular society, it is illuminating to note that while between 1965 and 1970 the price of the most durable goods rose by only 18 percent (and food costs by far less), the expense of services (such as education) went up by as much as 42 percent. So much for the A.F.T.'s myth of unrelieved academic poverty!

According to Bell, the type of social changes analyzed have produced a number of stresses. One of them is the conflict between those who interpret science as a disinterested pursuit of

knowledge and those who defend its ties to industry and the military. An even more acute tension exists between the post-industrial technocracy and the current radical egalitarians. While social decision-making must presuppose an intellectual class selected on the basis of cerebral distinction, "contemporary populism, in its desire for wholesale egalitarianism, insists in the end on complete leveling." Bell examines this leveling with regard to the clamor for equality of result in education and hiring. He contrasts the abuses practiced under the guise of Affirmative Action with the liberal ideals of rationality and individualism. He also asks whether the eclipse of these values would not bring about a return to ascribed social status and a consequent lessening of individual human achievement. Although this populism pretends to renew the liberal commitment to equality, "it is not for fairness, but against elitism." As such it represents a threat to the very meritocracy needed to create further social improvement.

Although there is an ever-present danger to oversimplify a book so monumentally constructed, I do not think that any violence has been done here to Professor Bell's ideas. I also believe it possible to evaluate his main argument, repeatedly stated in the opening and closing chapters, without having to pass judgment on each of his references to those social thinkers either criticized or cited in support of his views. In fact the numerous quotations sometimes serve to blur rather than to illustrate his points. A digression into Marx's two schemes of social development, for instance, seems largely irrelevant to the chapter on bureaucratization into which it is set. So, too, the disproportionately long discussion on John Rawls in the final section, whose principle of fairness Bell tries to evaluate in considering the doctrine of equality of result. The effect is neither to refute this utilitarian socialist, nor even to maintain a continuity in the presentation.

Perhaps Bell's most obvious difficulty is his inability to separate the task of social forecasting from his own liberal democratic values. The decision of a Republican administration to increase deficit spending is viewed as a sign of "economic sophistication," and the allocation of tax monies to education as an expression of cultural concern (never as an accommodation to lobbying teachers). In one particularly unfortunate passage, Bell asks rhetorically whether "Insofar as this society like every other is undergoing a multiple revolution of a diverse yet simultaneous character . . . do we not need more conscious means of monitoring social change and the creation of mechanisms for anticipating the future?" Is not this intended statement of historical inevitability the type of exhortation most appropriate for an A.D.A. luncheon? How well Clio has worked in this case to reconcile the wave of the future with the author's own conviction!

Bell makes an even graver error in his analysis of the technocratic elite, which he believes is destined to control Western society. Its members are being drawn from the physical, natural, and above all the social sciences, while at the same time, the locus for the post-industrial community is moving from the firm and industry into the university. Essential for this shift is the symbiotic relationship that government and industries have already developed with centers of learning, whereby funds and incentives are supplied by the first and various services by the second. Bell discusses the soaring college enrollment as yet a further testimony to the growing social recognition of the universities and of all those associated with them. Nonetheless, the class he writes about, is largely fictitious. An alliance formed between technology and social engineering, originating in the universities and coming to shape the economic future of the West, was an integral part of what by now can be called an unrealizable dream. For however much Kenneth Galbraith, Robert Heilbroner, and even Daniel Bell, may still yearn for the realization of that vision, its incompatibility with reality becomes daily more evident.

The collaboration between technologists, on the one side, and social theorists, on the other, can only be based on a common set of values; whereas the "disjunction" which Bell notes between the "anti-industrial, anti-institutional" counter-culture and the "functional rationality" of a technical elite increasingly coincides with the division between the academic intelligentsia (particularly social scientists) and the business-industrial community. Both the cultural irrationalism apparent in our time (e.g., astrology and the cult of revolutionary violence) and the attack on the meritocracy have received no small support from the university, the supposed breeding ground for the guardians of a well-ordered future. The same academic community—rather than populist pressure—has also, by and large, inspired the New Politics' demand for compensatory justice.

As much as Professor Bell might wish to believe otherwise, it is not the descendants of Dixiecrats or Nebraskan farmers, but the members of his own guild, who are clamoring for open enrollment at colleges and for racial quotas as a professional qualification. Moreover, according to one well-known Carnegie Institute Survey, it is the humanists and social scientists within the professoriate who have most conspicuously advanced such causes. A rather stark contrast seems to be present between them and the engineering and medical faculties. According to Seymour Lipset this antithesis can be plotted along a wide spectrum of issues, encompassing both political and cultural values. I do not wish to draw moral judgments about the reasons for this gulf: as by contrasting the scientific rigor and down-to-earth focus of one group with the fanciful pose of alienation of the other. What concerns me is simply to point out the improba-

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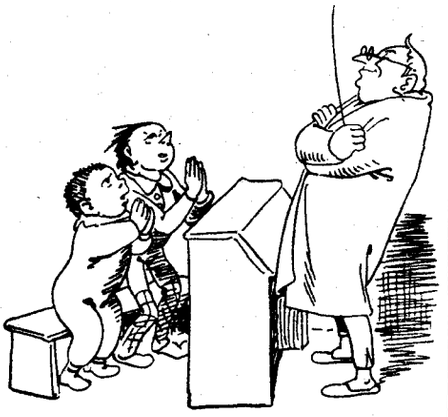

bility of the type of coalition which Bell imagines will eventually lead the post-industrial West. I doubt that engineers and manufacturers will soon turn for general leadership to social scientists. And were that to happen, it appears even less plausible that the social science faculties of the prestigious universities would fight for the meritocracy which Bell describes in such detail.

Despite his faulty forecasting, his book can be read with profit. His comments on social change are, in the main, well-considered; and while several chapters would bear revising and condensing, other parts are worthy of our intellectual respect. I speak particularly of the conclusion, whose critique of compensatory justice would almost serve to justify the purchase of the entire volume.

Paul Gottfried

Book Review

The Hundred Million Dollar Payoff

How Big Labor Buys its Democrats

by Douglas Caddy,
Arlington House, $8.95

UNION MEMBERS MAY soon happen upon an unlikely hero, a man who does not fit the traditional image of a labor leader. Douglas Caddy is not a union leader. He is not even a union member. Rather, he is a young Washington lawyer who served as the original attorney for the Watergate seven. But he has written a fascinating book, which is essential, if difficult, reading for the would-be political reformer, and for union members concerned about the use of their dues money.

The Hundred Million Dollar Payoff is the result of an investigation into campaign abuse which Caddy started after resigning from the Watergate case, in dismay at some of his clients' requests and practices. Caddy, however, directed his attention to an area of abuse long ignored by the media (and by the Watergate committee)—violations of federal campaign law by leaders of organized labor.

Caddy relies primarily on union publications and documents (obtained from the public record) to explain precisely how unions support their favored candidates for federal office. The process would put any corporate manipulator to shame. It heavily emphasizes contributions "in-kind" rather than in cash. That is, labor unions contribute only limited amounts of cash; instead, they assign their paid full-time political operatives to counsel, and even work actively in, their priority campaigns. Unions can also allocate their resources in other ways, including the provision of mobile loudspeaker trucks, organization of a registration and/or get-out-the-vote drive for the campaign, printing of posters, brochures and other materials, use of union halls for political meetings, etc.

Although the book is sub-titled "How Big Labor Buys its Democrats," Caddy also takes on Republicans. However, the union leaders support Democrats by a twenty-to-one margin, so most of the elected officials involved are Democrats. The list includes major political figures, among them some of the self-righteous members of the Watergate panel, like Senator Joseph Montoya (Dem.–New Mexico). The title of the book alludes to Victor Reisel's financial estimate of labor's political muscle for financing federal elections.

Caddy's book provides a powerful prima facie case for the Department of Justice to seek indictments and prosecutions of those union leaders who have violated the Federal Corrupt Practices Act (now the Fair Elections Campaign Act of 1971), though the author is skeptical of the ability of the Department of Justice to initiate a thorough investigation and prosecution of the guilty parties. In the third section of his book, he proposes a number of remedies; foremost among them is his plea for a new special prosecutor to oversee the investigation. Many of our most vociferous reformist Senators, like Sen. John Pastore (Dem.–Rhode Island), limit their zeal to the prosecution of fat cats and corporate executives. It is their selective opposition to illegal campaign contributions which disturbs Caddy.

Caddy, however, does more than present a detailed and lucid brief documenting significant labor union violations of federal election laws. He draws a distinction between the practices of union leaders and the views of most union members, and indicates that the candidates chosen by the union chiefs are not necessarily those preferred by the members who supply the funds to support union political operations.

Caddy believes that unions have abandoned their traditional function of collective bargaining; instead, they have become political machines, fueled by compulsory dues money from members. A small coterie of chieftains decides how this massive political fund shall be disbursed—via the "goods and services" i.e., in-kind contributions, route.

Meanwhile, the individual union member, surely no match for his powerful union and its battery of attorneys, must acquiesce in the use of his resources for the support of candidates he has not selected. Indeed, another book could be written on this intriguing subject—a comparison of the views of rank-and-file and the voting records of elected officials supported by their unions.

Plenty of surveys are available to indicate the conclusions such a book might reach. Most rank-and-file are concerned about the social issues (e.g., crime, drugs, youth and campus unrest, pornography). Yet most liberal candidates and elected officials supported by the unions are soft on these issues, and generally weak in the entire area. Or consider the inflation issue, a source of profound concern among rank-and-file. Yet union-supported candidates are among the big spenders in Congress—the advocates of precisely the kind of deficit financing which induces inflation.

Caddy cannot be faulted for his limited treatment of issues and union member sentiment on those issues. The purpose of his book is to document a compelling legal case against the labor union leaders who violate federal law. Caddy not only succeeds, but his examples depict a disturbing pattern—the labor unions have given illegal contributions to the chairmen and a majority of the membership of both committees in Congress with jurisdiction over labor union activities.

Hopefully, many Americans will read the Caddy book before November. Otherwise, organized labor's political strategists may succeed in getting a "veto-proof" Congress—two thirds of the elected Senators and Congressmen beholden to organized labor.

The results, based on my own study of organized labor's current favorites in Congress, would be catastrophic. Does the average man or woman who belongs to a labor union really want a stronger federal government, higher federal spending, more inflation, and a squishy-soft law and order posture?

Arnold Steinberg

The Fourteenth Chronicle

Letters and Diaries of John Dos Passos

Edited by Townsend Ludington
Gambit $15.00

AS A SPOKESMAN for an age, John Dos Passos reflects the confusion, frustration, and intermittent joy of a generation maturing in the face of war and conflicting ideologies. He stood alone as a man facing a world whose manners and morals were often foreign to his own. He had close friends whom he worshipped and loved, but at the same time he felt a need to instruct and entertain them. He was moved by the search for a purified society which was not based upon any one ideology, but rather one in which man could follow his own philosophical dreams and desires. This sense of individualistic moral purpose pervades his letters and diaries.

Born January 14, 1896, the illegitimate son of John R. Dos Passos and Lucy Madison, Dos Passos learned early to live with the painful loneliness that was to follow him throughout his life. He traveled abroad with his mother during his early years and boarded in London while attending school. His unusual lifestyle, poor eyesight, and lack of athletic ability caused him to be considered "different" at school and he found it difficult to make close friends. Isolated socially, Dos Passos developed into a sensitive and observant young man who eventually felt compelled to leave school and explore the "endless welter of experience."

Although an avowed pacifist, he became an ambulance driver on the Italian front during World War I and then a sergeant in the American army. He later considered these experiences to be "the most valuable part of my education during those years." Dos Passos's battlefield life further confirmed his "enthusiastic pacifism," and his reflections in a letter to Rumsey Marvin point to his total disillusionment with the entire process of making war. "The war is utter damn nonsense—a vast cancer fed by lies and self-seeking malignity on the part of those who don't do the fighting." It was also during this period of his life that he began work on his first novel, *One Man's Initiation –1917.*

His extensive travels before and during the war years brought him into contact with a vast array of people, many of whom would remain his lifelong companions and correspondents. Such figures as Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, Gerald and Sara Murphy, Upton Sinclair, and Ernest Hemingway were to shape his life and his works in the years to come. But it was his closest friends, Rumsey Marvin, Robert Hillyer, Dudley Poore, and Stewart Mitchell to whom he would turn in times of trouble and ecstasy. In spite of these lasting friendships, Dos Passos often remarked that he felt alone in this world. He wrote to Rumsey, "At school I was a most unsocial friendless little beast—and it has been hard to shake off the habit of solitude... Although you know there are people who sort of have solitude in their blood, who are just as lonely in a crowd or on a mountain top —I may be one of them." It seems that the only period of his life in which he managed to evade this solitude was during his marriage to Katharine Smith.

He met Katy while visiting Hemingway in Key West, Florida, in April 1928. Evidently, he was immediately infatuated and they were married in August 1929. Their life together was total bliss for Dos Passos, even though they were constantly broke and in debt. When Katy died in a car accident in 1947, Dos Passos was thrown into a three-year period of despair. "I had thought myself fairly well-versed in the miseries of life. Suddenly I find I had been completely ignorant of these things. It makes you wonder how much else there is that you dont [sic] know about."

In 1949, Dos Passos married Elizabeth Holdridge and settled into the life of a farmer. They had one daughter, Lucy, whom he adored, and his final years were divided among traveling, writing, and farming.

Although he continued to correspond with his friends after Katy's death, his letters seem to lack the vibrant spark of life that had been so noticeable in his earlier communications. Nonetheless, his concern and interest in life never waned. Even when death hit on September 28, 1970, Horsely Gantt noted that "inquiring, interested look on his face that typified him throughout his life."

The letters and diaries of Dos Passos bring out personality common to the age of the lost generation. He continually fluctuated between socialism and American democratic ideals during his early years (most often leaning toward the former), and eventually reached his own conclusion as to the inordinate rights of man. Dos Passos realized that he was happiest when he was free to do whatever he chose. This recognition must have led him to the belief that all men, no matter what social or political views they hold, require individual liberty. He felt that without this ultimate freedom man was doomed to fall under the machinations of a bureaucratic government. "Of all the things in this world a government is the thing least worth fighting for."

It was for this reason that Dos Passos ultimately recognized America as his home, and his works after this period reflect a new-found satisfaction in America. This understanding would take him above the petty ideologies that flowed around him and into a world of internal and external freedom. In a Faustian sense, Dos Passos was a man willing to face the consequences of his convictions, and as he stated in one of his letters, "A man writes to be damned, not to be saved."

The consequences of Dos Passos's convictions took the form not so much of damnation as a long stretch in limbo. His trilogy, *U.S.A.*, stands as one of the most powerful and unique series of novels in the history of American literature, and for those three novels alone he should have won a Nobel prize. His influence on American literature has been profound, yet somehow he has never received the recognition he deserves. Today in college English courses it is commonplace to be assigned novels by such comparatively inferior writers as Kurt Vonnegut or Norman Mailer. (And it's interesting to note that the techniques of Mailer's least flawed novel, *The Naked and the Dead*, rely heavily on many of those techniques pioneered by Dos Passos).

Some believe that Dos Passos rests in limbo because of what was perceived as an ideological shift. During the early years, the Left claimed him, and the American literary establishment was and continues to be leftist. Thus, when he produced *Midcentury*, decidedly conservative in thrust, and when he increasingly became identified toward the end with *National Review*, which printed his last piece, many viewed him as an apostate.

Unfortunately, this sort of judgment does occur. And in Dos Passos's case it is totally unwarranted. He never identified himself totally with ideological leftism, nor did he end his career thinking of himself as a rightist. The final letter in this collection—to the Committee on Admissions of the Century Association, sponsoring the membership of Bill Buckley—demonstrates, I think, Dos Passos's basic attitude toward ideological matters: "Since the grand old days of Bob Benchley no one has appeared in the animal world so full of high spirits and sheer animal warmth. No one held Bob Benchley's occasional political acts against him."

Dos Passos ended as he began, a man alone, an individualist in search of that society which would allow him the fullest possible exercise of his individualism. In the thirties this often meant making common cause with the Left. In the fifties and sixties, it meant siding in many instances with the Right. But as these letters and diaries prove, Dos Passos must ultimately be viewed as the quintessential American, a man beyond ideologies. If we ever become sufficiently sophisticated to view him in this way, perhaps he will be released from his sentence in limbo to take his rightful place among the very few giants of American literature.

Mary Jo Doyle

The Bootblack Stand

by George Washington Plunkitt

Dr. George Washington Plunkitt, our prize-winning political analyst, is celebrating the publication of his new book, which is now available at avant-garde bookstores throughout New Jersey. Dr. Plunkitt's book is about the importance of altruism in politics and it is entitled What's in It for Me? *Although Dr. Plunkitt expects to earn ten million dollars from sales of his new book, he has agreed to continue to advise public figures through this column. Address all correspondence to The Bootblack Stand, c/o* The Alternative, *P.O. Box 877, 102 West Sixth Street, Bloomington, Indiana 47401, Continental U.S.A.*

Dear Dr. Plunkitt:

During our heroic singlehanded campaign to crack the sinister Watergate Conspiracy we became aware of the fact that Governmental Secrecy is all around us even when we take a nice warm bath. There are some things the government won't tell even when you ask them very nicely.

Our editors at *The Washington Post* have given us the green light to wage war on the Government's Vast Network of Secrets, starting with some of their oldest and darkest arcana. On behalf of the People of the United States we will rip the lid off one of the most closely guarded secrets in government history. We intend to reveal the identity of the Unknown Soldier, heretofore known as Unknown and not even allowed Veterans' benefits! To do this we will need a few leaks. Where should we go from here?

Bravely but Duty-Bound,
Carl Bernstein and Robert Woodward

Dear Gentlemen:

A capital suggestion! But I think you are going about it all wrong. After all, the real mystery is not who the Unknown Soldier is but why he has not said boo since his return five decades ago. There is something eerie about a man who returns from Europe, is holed up in that peculiar little structure and doesn't even ask about his Veterans' benefits. And why does the government insist on that military guard? What have they got to hide? Doesn't the Unknown Soldier ever take in a movie or go for a ride in the country? No one knows. Get the ACLU into the act. What a service you will perform! Get to it. Start asking a few questions down in the shower room of the Washington YMCA. That is all I can tell you.

—GWP

Dear Dr. Plunkitt:

If the people of America do not protest too greatly, I intend to go into retirement this winter after four decades in politics. I am an amateur gardener and I would love to spend my last phase ministering to my periwinkles, my lichens, and some imported truffles which Willy Brandt sent me. Also I want to write my autobiography, and therein lies the sticky wicket.

I am such a complicated man that there is a possibility that simpler souls might see contradictions in my career which they would cite to embarrass me. You see, beginning in 1943 when I introduced a Congressional resolution encouraging the establishment of a powerful world-governing organization and extending into the 1960s, I was an outspoken champion of what by hindsight appear to be cold warring, presidential usurpation and U.S. intervention into the affairs of foreign governments. For instance I attacked Senator Goldwater for hawkishness and for wanting to debilitate the presidency. Then in 1964 I introduced the Tonkin Resolution but soon thereafter I began my speeches against a powerful presidency. I became a dove and an opponent of international intervention. I can't believe intelligent people can really see these enlightened actions as inconsistent but they do. If I put all of this down in my autobiography they will be saying I sound like a jackass. What should I do? Maybe I could write two autobiographies and sign one anonymous?

Cordially,
Senator J. W. Fulbright

Dear Senator Fulbright:

I am surprised to see you so concerned about sounding like a jackass. It never bothered you in the past and it does not seem to bother many of your colleagues today. Regarding your autobiography, if you try to expurgate contradictions from your past you will be cutting so much that your proposed autobiography will have to be published as a pamphlet. So publish the truth, contradictions and all. You can title it *A Schizophrenic Goes to Washington* or *The Arrogance of Amnesia* or *The Senator and the Full Moon.*

—GWP

Music Review

Sibelius: Seven Symphonies

MUCH AS BAROQUE music should not be judged by the standards of romantic music, Sibelius's works should not be judged in the light of middle European musical literature. His sonorities are as foreign as Dansk is to Meissen. The Finnish land and climate must instill a taste that is difficult for outsiders to appreciate. There is a distinct simplicity of life that is inherent in their furniture, crystal, other art forms, and Sibelius's music.

Jean Sibelius wrote his seven symphonies between the years 1898 to 1924. Although he did not die until 1957, he was essentially musically silent after 1929. The reason was never explained; however, one must suspect that he felt there was no longer an audience for his music.

This collection is the third complete

Karajan and Kamu,

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Radio Symphony Orchestra of Helsinki, 6 LP, 2720 067-10, $32.94

set of the symphonies although in a strict sense it is complete only because all symphonies are included. The first three are conducted by Okko Kamu while the balance are led by Herbert Von Karajan; thus the advantage of conceptual unity is lost in this grouping.

Von Karajan needs no introduction. However, Kamu, at least to me, is relatively unknown. He is a 28-year-old Finn who is currently musical director of the Finnish Radio Orchestra. He has forsaken the parapetetic mode of the jet set young conductors and has restricted his guest appearances in order to develop a sound background in the standard repertoire. These releases attest that he has made an auspicious beginning.

Two orchestras are represented on these discs. The Helsinki Radio Orchestra is heard playing the first symphony. Although it is not a bad group, it is not up to the standards of major orchestras. The balance of the works are recorded by the Berlin Philharmonic, clearly one of the two best orchestras on the continent. The sound is outstanding, the surfaces are silent and the quantity of the vinyl is generous, belying RCA's claim that their "skinny discs" were meant to give us better sound. Happily the symphonies are not placed on the records in a sequential

fashion. That practice is an anachronism peculiar to the domestics that harkens back to the days of 78 RPM. As nice as they are I cannot imagine stacking all seven symphonies up for five continuous hours of Sibelius.

This was my introduction to the first symphony and I had no other recorded performances available for criteria. The performance seemed good, the symphony interesting, but the orchestra weak.

With the second symphony one was immediately aware there had been an ensemble change. This is one of the few works of Sibelius that has found its way into the standard repertoire. The number of recordings available is obscene and is testament to one of the suicidal practices of the recording industry. Kamu's performance is one of the highlights in this box. The second symphony can be easily hackneyed because of its many tempo changes and pauses. If one wishes to hear how bad this can be, he is referred to Paul Paray's performance. Kamu finds his way through these traps and renders a performance that is reminiscent of Koussevitsky's; what is more, Kamu's work has the advantage of modern recording techniques.

The third symphony terminates what has been called "the folklore period." I became familiar with this work via a recording loosely borrowed by an old roommate from the local library. Sixten Ehrling led that work in a delightful manner. It is a light happy piece which, although preceding, tends to underscore the brooding fourth symphony. Kamu does not conduct with the verve Ehrling displayed but the work is not badly played and the symphony's personality is not altered in any way.

It has been said that the fourth symphony was Sibelius's flirtation with modernism. I think the case has been overstated. The music is still very typically Sibelius, but rather than amuse or excite, it strikes those emotions that are solemn. The reflective and pessimistic mood of the first three movements are relieved temporarily by a more optimistic allegro, but even this ends in the lower registers of the orchestra. This material is particularly suited to Von Karajan's talent of illuminating the inner lines of musical works. He renders an introspective interpretation that is valid and effective, though it is not the only way to play this work.

The fifth symphony is probably exceeded in popularity only by the second, and as always, this is not a commentary upon its artistic merit. The work is optimistic in contrast to the preceding work. The performance is a beautiful and eloquent statement. Some might find it to be a bit schmalzy at points, but all seemed in good taste to me.

The final two symphonies are both written in the form of a single movement. The sixth is a beautiful piece that is all Sibelius, but a springlike and playful Sibelius. Both the orchestra and conductor are up to the task. The last symphony is probably the least attractive superficially, but wears exceedingly well. I find it difficult to make a meaningful statement as to the performance of this work because I have no parameters available. It seems that the orchestra plays well and to me the interpretation is convincing.

Although Sibelius was trained in the German school, his symphonies are acoustically more akin to the impressionistic school with its strong emphasis on color rather than melody. With each succeeding symphony the thematic material becomes more sparse. This gives the listener very little on which to fasten, and probably accounts for the popularity of the second symphony, which is easier to follow. However, for the persistent listener there is much enjoyment in these symphonies.

Included in this package are the tone poems, *The Bard* and *En Saga* as well as *Finlandia*, *Valse triste*, and *The Swan of Tuonela*. None of these are to be dismissed as lollipops although to me *Finlandia* is still a doxology.

These performances were recorded at various times between 1965 and 1973. It is quite rare, if ever, that boxed sets offer the definitive statement on every work included. What they can offer is an artistic overview of or a philosophical approach to a composer. This collection does not offer this compensation. If you would like to own a set and the money is available, I would suggest the performances on London with Maazel conducting. In general the eclectic approach is the best. All these symphonies are available on DGG singles and as such I would give consideration to the second, fourth, fifth, and sixth symphonies; *En Saga* and the *Swan of Tuonela*.

Al Somers

Book Review

The Machinery of Freedom

Guide to a Radical Capitalism

by David Friedman
Harper and Row Paper $2.25

DAVID FRIEDMAN'S new book, *The Machinery of Freedom*, is a treatise on freedom and government. Its purpose is to persuade us of the superiority of a libertarian society and to explain how it could be achieved and how it would operate. The "machinery of freedom" referred to in the title is, of course, the capitalist system. The notion that the institutions of private property and a free enterprise economy are the essential bases of political freedom, is certainly not a new one. The *Federalist Papers* show that the Founders hoped the "great variety of interests, parties and sects" which exist in a *large, commercial* republic would ensure that a "coalition of a majority of a whole society could seldom take place on any other principles than those of justice and the general good."

The Machinery of Freedom, however, is no mere endorsement of the wisdom of James Madison. The subtitle of Friedman's book, *Guide to a Radical Capitalism*, reflects its contents much more accurately. For David Friedman is no old-fashioned Whig, but rather a modern libertarian. The basis of his political philosophy is that "people should be permitted to run their own lives as they wish." Like many contemporary liberals and conservatives, he is opposed to military conscription and laws banning drug use, gambling, pornography, and other "victimless" crimes. But because Friedman is an anarcho-capitalist, he doesn't stop there. Unlike the Founders, he believes that men as well as angels can live without government. His enemy is not big, bad, or foolish government, but government itself. The goal of the political program he sets forth is to have private enterprise absorb all of the functions currently performed by the state, and to have the market thus maximize everyone's happiness by giving them "what they want."

What would life be like in Friedman's dream society? One thing is sure: we'd all be very busy. First of all, each person would have to decide which "laws" he wants to live under. The individual's capacity to choose wisely is not discussed, presumably because a moron can "want" as well as any philosopher. (The equality of "wants" is the one type of equality of which Friedman is very tolerant.) Arrangements for police protection would have to be made by each citizen. Different court systems would have to be compared and one privately owned system of justice purchased. There'd also be the risky business of buying food and drugs. It seems that the author of *The Machinery of Freedom* found out one day that nonpasteurized milk is illegal in Illinois and the injustice of this so overwhelmed him that he wants to do us the great favor of getting the Food and Drug Administration out of our lives. (It is important not to miss Friedman's

point here. He is not arguing solely that we would benefit if the FDA set less stringent safety standards, though he does make that point. Rather, underlying this reform is the individual's "right" to swallow whatever he damn well pleases, be it aspirin or thalidomide.) Still, whatever the basis of this new freedom, on the way home from buying some laws a member of Friedman's society would be well-advised to have the sausage he bought examined by the local free-enterprise chemist. Naturally this is all contingent on whether the owner of the streets between his home, the chemist's, and the butcher shop sees fit to let him pass, something Friedman never doubts. Indeed, considering how much time everyone must spend shopping for his necessities, it's difficult to determine when there would be time to produce them.

It is amusing to dwell on Friedman's more spectacularly unworkable schemes to "sell the state." Each of them is like a separate, tiny puzzle that gives the solver, i.e., the finder of the flaw, a curious sense of satisfaction. But there is really not much to be gained from contemplating such inconveniences of libertarian life as the futility of yelling cop in a world of private protection agencies, or its more severe dangers—for instance, the insecurity of a nation guarded by a *voluntarily* funded and *voluntarily* staffed defense establishment. Most libertarians themselves oppose these proposals and concede that common sense mandates at least a "nightwatchman" state. We must resist the temptation to wander deeper and deeper into the mad world conjured up in *The Machinery of Freedom*. We must look instead to its real value, that is, the way it demonstrates the limits of the author's supreme principles: consumer sovereignty and private property.

The Limits of Consumer Sovereignty

Focusing on the limits of consumer sovereignty is certainly not a plea for John Kenneth Galbraith's point of view. One doesn't have to believe that Americans are the unwitting tools of Madison Avenue to recognize that even within a liberal society some essential institutions must be exempted from the fundamental liberal axiom, the equal right of every individual to choose his course of action.

Friedman's very workable plan for "a free market university" is an ideal example of the limits of consumer sovereignty. At the beginning of his discussion of "Adam Smith U.," as he calls it, Friedman expresses a heartfelt sympathy with New Left critics of the modern American University. What is the source of this rare agreement? According to the author of *The Machinery of Freedom* it is the shared goal of getting educational institutions to "produce what the consumer wants," and his main intention is to demonstrate that the market is a more effective means of doing so than the democratic system.

Within this new knowledge supermarket, a teacher's salary would be paid directly to students and therefore his income would depend primarily on how many students wanted to take his courses. It is intriguing to consider the effects of education on the "please us or else" plan. Its inventor's purpose seems to be the encouragement of intellectual fadism and sycophantic professors. Fortunately, some disciplines have built-in protection from this proclaimed "renaissance" in education. Though there would be no bridge inspectors in Friedmanonia, students would learn to "hire" competent engineering professors or suffer the economic consequences of building bridges that don't stand. (Unfortunately, their first customers wouldn't have the advantage of any such built-in protection.)

Neither would the liberal arts. The prospects for philosophy and political science at Adam Smith U. are especially distressing. Political and philosophic truths, whatever they may be, are more difficult to discern than what constitutes a "better mousetrap" and the search for that truth is not necessarily best guided by the market, i.e., the desires of a consumer no matter how ignorant.

It is no doubt true that colleges and universities in a free society are to a large extent based on "consumer sovereignty." Students can apply to and attend a variety of institutions, many of which are free to choose the type of education they will provide. Within a college each student can choose among different courses of study. This setup, despite its shortcomings, seems to have provided a lot of people with a decent education and fulfilled the nation's need for citizens with a wide variety of skills. Nevertheless, within any discipline, education must always be based on a hierarchical principle, authority rather than choice. Recognition of the principle of consumer sovereignty does not equal total commitment to it. Great teachers must necessarily be great scholars or thinkers; their "greatness" consists of some activity that is worthy in itself, something beyond the mere "satisfaction of consumers." This tension is rooted in another conflict: one between the consumer, who chooses between alternatives and therefore must be a knower, and the student who is by definition a learner. Education is supposed to free a student from his narrow opinions and predispositions. But education based strictly on supply and demand curves encourages the belief that he has the "right" to indulge them rather than the obligation to rise above them.

The Limits of Private Property

A difficulty related to Friedman's adherence to consumer sovereignty as the supreme principle of human action is his faith that private property is the necessary basis of human society. In his view, nearly everything is a form of private property. Obviously, in a state of anarchy, public property and public responsibility would be impossible. In keeping with this notion of private property rights, the individual regards his labor and even his person as "his property." This way of looking at politics provides a sufficient method of dealing with many conflicts between individuals. Clearly, theft of what is recognized by others as "property" is wrong. (How things become property, how they acquire this necessary public recognition is not dealt with.)

But this deification of property does lead to some bizarre conclusions; for instance, going after your neighbor with an axe would constitute about the same type (if not the same magnitude) of offense as chopping down his cherry tree on the sly. There are even more disturbing consequences, and not the least of these arise from the existence of children. Libertarians in general, and anarchists in particular, find that children are a real nuisance when it comes to discussing "rights." They tend to avoid the direct question: Do parents own their children? Since procreation does not require any economic obligation to any other person, are children simply property like a refrigerator or a house?

Friedman does, it must be admitted, take a stab at this problem. He claims to have found a "simple" solution in "the rights of youth." These "rights" give "any child above some very low age (say, nine years old)" the opportunity to exercise all the options of libertarian society, including getting a job or, presumably, if his playmates persuade him to do so, becoming a drug addict.

Unfortunately, even if one accepts the assertion that a ten-year-old is capable of running his own life, Friedman doesn't explain who is to take responsibility for younger children. Although we are told that there are no such things as "needs," only "wants" that are valued differently by different individuals, a child might "need" an inoculation to spare him from some contagious disease. Does anyone have a "right" to interfere if his parents find medical care morally objectionable or too expensive? Do the parents have the right to endanger others by allowing their child to spread infection? Suppose a parent values his automobile so much more than his child that he arranges with his protection agency to have a car thief followed and captured but not a kidnapper? How do property rights protect their offspring? These simple examples demonstrate merely the most basic problem of preserving the lives of future citizens and protecting the community. They don't even touch on the equally grave and more difficult problem of the degree of parental autonomy over a child's education and moral rearing. Nevertheless, they demonstrate clearly enough that despite the way the separation of "human rights" and "property rights" has been used to debase the public discourse, a distinction between the rights of property and the human ends they serve is necessary for any intelligent political judgments to be possible.

The Folly of Pure Libertarianism

Property rights and consumer sovereignty, as we see, have shortcomings

Brudnoy's Film Index

■ **Animal Crackers:** The Four Marx Brothers in their second film, written, like their greats, by George S. Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind. But this 1930 dud is static, stagey, dull for great stretches. An occasional gem, like this, which is better than a half-century of child psychology, from Groucho: "This would be a better world for children if parents had to eat the spinach."

■ **The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz:** Montreal in the 1940s. A young Jewish go-getter getting going on making it big. Hints of racialism, an irritating quality of unsureness about whether this is a comedy or drama, but redeemed by some perceptive looks at the many faces of Hebrew life in that most anti-Semitic part of North America, then as well as now.

■ **The Bank Shot:** George C. Scott lisping and growling through a marvelously funny bank heist—and I mean a heist of the *bank*, not just the bread. Some moments are side-splitting. One regrets that justice wins in the end.

■ **Blazing Saddles:** And the band plays on. Still a fantastic hit, albeit composed of disparate scenes rather than much of a plot. One winning episode: the Injuns, led by a Yiddish Sitting Blintz (Mel Brooks) circle in on the settlers, ready for the kill. But they spare the colored family (the son of which grows up to be Black Bart, sheriff extraordinaire) because the red Chief's never seen white folks darker than he. But of course.

■ **Chinatown:** Jack Nicholson and Faye Dunaway, with John Huston, in a film directed by Roman Polanski, evoking 1930s crime dramas. Set in Los Angeles and involving murder, incest, and political malfeasance, this is one of the brightest spots in the current theater circuit.

■ **Daisy Miller:** Henry James's piquant novella deliciously filmed by Peter Bogdanovich, with Cybill Shepherd as the innocent abroad, confronting bitchy grande dames, a restrained American chap, a crude Italian, and the Roman fever.

■ **The Exorcist:** Still going strong and scaring you half to death. Winner recently of the prestigious Leon S. Rhodes Award for Cinema Excellence.

■ **For Pete's Sake:** A nearly witless Streisand comedy about a gal who'll do just about *anything* for her husband. The shticks fall flat, Streisand is piggish, and poor Michael Sarrazin, as her hubby, looks ripe for desertion.

■ **Harold and Maude:** An offbeat and totally winning comedy about an 80-year-old wacky lady much loved by a 19-year-old wierdo. This promises to become a cult classic; in any case, it is tender, wry, and wicked, all at once.

■ **The Mad Adventures of "Rabbi" Jacob:** The funniest import (from France, this time) in years, a cleverly constructed farce about mistaken identities, bigotries, revolution, and the bourgeoisie, haut and otherwise. Louis de Funes as the "Rabbi" has the world's most plastic face and is an absolute delight in this, his first film to make it big in America.

■ **The Parallax View:** Political assassination, conspiracy, and split-second timing, with Warren Beatty as an investigative reporter who goes too far. A triumph for everyone concerned, and many cuts above the "Executive Action" type of cinema crap.

■ **The Sting:** Light, lovable, vastly over-rated, but undeniably pleasing, especially the musical score.

■ **The Three Musketeers:** Will it ever close? Not likely. There's this kid, see, and his britches are really too small for him, and his sword's rusting just lying around, so off he swaggers to join the other kids in saving fair damsels in distress and shaking up the neighborhood.

■ **Uptown Saturday Night:** A funky Negro comedy with Sidney Poitier and Bill Cosby as two average Joes hot on the trail of a lost winning lottery ticket; Harry Belafonte as a high yellow Godfather; Flip Wilson as da preacher; Roscoe Lee Browne as a pompous, conniving congressman (of which, in real life, there are 535), and many more. Slices of Afro-American life, good-natured, and just plain fun.

■ **A Very Natural Thing:** The first attempt at a serious homosexual film, it emerges instead as an unintentional comedy, provoking the question: is the ultimate end of gay lib the insistence that homosexual romance is but another version of the most vapid and sterile heterosexual marriage? Embarrassing, with too many slow-motion romps and too little inner humor.

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as principles for organizing or understanding political society. Friedman never asks why these freedoms are valuable or what ends they are supposed to serve. They are simply procedural guides, and therefore inadequate as principles of justice. While the search for justice has occupied civilized men at all places and times, the word is barely mentioned in *The Machinery of Freedom*. This omission is no doubt intentional; from Friedman's silence we must infer that "to do justice" is merely to impose the will of one group on another. Still, the author owes us some explanation.

In the first place, "social justice" deserves consideration and not contempt. Friedman's law is "taxation is theft." The implication is that the market price of everything is always the just price and that the "deserving poor" merit nothing but their poverty. But justice is much more than "social justice," and the public good is more than an economic concept. At the very least, it involves simple gratitude (call it patriotism, if you like) for all of the benefits conferred on the individual by the community. Why does each person "owe" payment for every safety pin he uses but nothing for all the achievements of previous generations of fellow citizens, e.g., language, law, custom, culture, and so on? Even more important are those shared values that prevent and resolve conflicts between fellow citizens.

Given these objections, Friedman would probably fall back on his favorite rejoinder: He didn't sign the Constitution and therefore doesn't owe anybody anything. This peculiar version of the "social contract" is the closest thing we can find to a source of Friedman's views. It shares much with the work of minor social contract theorists such as John Rawls, on the Left, and one of Friedman's favorites, anarchist Lysander Spooner. Like theirs, his approach to politics is abstract and entirely separate from the realities of political life. His ethical imperatives have no basis in the real world. He doesn't deal with the minimum requirements of social order, the differences between men, and above all their similarities, i.e., their common human nature. At best, this failure leads to political proposals that the ordinary citizen would find unconscionable.

Unfortunately, it also contributes to the illusion that political freedom is something easily maintained. Friedman's libertarian society is possible only to the extent that its members are already citizens of the "land of steady habits." The public philosophy of a libertarian society would necessarily undermine tradition, religion, education, and the abiding faith in the justice of the community, even though these are the roots of the qualities so necessary for that society's survival. If history teaches any lesson about freedom, it is that the stability of any liberal political order always rests on the stability of other nonpolitical or subpolitical institutions. If Friedman thinks there is anything automatic about the prerequisites of political freedom, I refer him to his admitted hero Adam Smith, who expressed deep concern that all the "intellectual, social and martial virtues" would disappear from the laboring poor in advanced societies "unless government takes some pains to prevent it."

Even if anarcho-capitalism as Friedman envisions it were desirable, it would not be possible. That is why so many people find Friedman's views "peculiar" (as he puts it). Despite his assertions to the contrary, anarchy is chaos. Political liberty, to quote no less a friend of human freedom than Lord Acton, is rather "the delicate fruit of a mature civilization."

Robert McTiernan

De Gaulle

Volume One: Man of Tomorrow

By Brian Crozier
Scribners $12.50

TWO IDEAS, and no more, dominate the European understanding of relations between states as it has developed since the end of the Middle Ages. The first is the idea of *raison d'état*, according to which a statesman may break any rule—moral or other—in the interest of his country. The second is the idea of the balance of power; this phrase has many meanings—the favorite British one describes the holding of the balance between combinations by a disinterested power, namely Britain—the most important of which for the purpose of this review is that suggesting the tendency of any sophisticated system of states to come to a balance and remain at peace. There is, evidently, a series of tensions between these two ideas; and another series of tensions within each idea. The foremost original theoretician of *raison d'état* was Machiavelli; of the balance of power, the Englishman Overbury. Within the history of modern Europe only four statesmen have understood the two ideas, and have been able to manipulate their tensions—Richelieu, Bismarck, Salisbury, and de Gaulle.

Nothing of this intellectual background to de Gaulle appears in Mr. Crozier's book. True, one gathers from his preface that his publishers have cut the work in half—arbitrarily and wrongly, as that preface implies. But he announces in Volume One the intense hostility to the General's ideas which he will delineate in Volume Two. That hostility is based on a conviction that de Gaulle, between 1958 and the end of his reign, betrayed the Western alliance by fooling around with Communist powers. Mr. Crozier takes a close-up view of his own times; the General looked at history in a longer perspective.

One must not review a second volume before it has appeared—though I am, I think, entitled to record my own view that de Gaulle did much more, and was more important, in his second period than in his first; and most of what he did was good. Crozier, however, does not deal with even the first period—from the flight to England to the end of the war—either adequately or historically. Most of the book merely repeats what we know; only in Chapter Five ("A Prophet Ignored") does Crozier offer a controversial view of de Gaulle's contribution to the theory of mechanized warfare. Gaullist propagandists have argued the General's prevision of tank war, and made him a prophet of the form. Later historians—notably Alastair Horne—have pointed out the vagueness of de Gaulle's ideas, and the postwar revision of *Towards the Army of the Future* was designed to make them more precise. Crozier is more in line with the Gaullists than with Horne, but he had a chance to sum up, and declined it, almost as though he were ignorant of the existence of the debate.

In truth, what de Gaulle contributed to the theory of modern warfare has little to do with that subject itself, and much to do with the history of French ideas about strategy. In the seventeenth century Turenne overthrew ideas favoring caution in battle and, since then, the French have oscillated between offensive and defensive strategic postures. In 1914–1918 they favored the offensive *élan* of Plan 17—and lost millions of men. In 1940 they favored the defensive—and nearly lost their country. (Actually, they did lose it, but de Gaulle got it back.) De Gaulle's contribution in the thirties was to suggest that modern methods of war open the way to an intelligent *offensive*. That was a vital debate for the French, not so much because Pétain, de Gaulle's patron, had won a battle in the First World War, but because Weygand, the commander who lost the battle of France, had written a book about Turenne, praised that commander's challenge to the defensive orthodoxy of his time, and himself crumbled into defense when faced with the German challenge. De Gaulle read Weygand's book; and learned from it. Crozier, in his account of de Gaulle's fight against the orthodoxy of the Maginot Line, tells us little about these internal stresses within the French military system—Weygand, after all, was once de Gaulle's commander in Poland.

This is, then, an unsatisfactory book. The question that remains is why no Anglo-Saxon has yet written a good study of de Gaulle—something which, for example, could be compared to Tournoux's *Pétain et de Gaulle*, or *La Tragédie du Général*. Crawley is large and dull, Sulzberger light and trivial, Crozier ramshackle. The answer seems to lie both in our inherent resistance to the capacity of the French mind to combine logic and mysticism, objectivity and personality, at a very high level of tension; and in de Gaulle's development of that capacity to extremes. "It is in the nature of noble hearts," said Lacordaire, "to discover the essential necessity of the times in which they live and to devote themselves to meeting it." It was one of the General's favorite quotations. He achieved the success it stated; but, because of the resistance of the Anglo-Saxon mind to the high style, we need, it seems, a French pen to describe how he did it.

Patrick Cosgrave

Serpent in Eden

H. L. MENCKEN
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THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA PRESS
Chapel Hill, 27514 *258 pages, $8.95*

The Talkies

by Benjamin Stein

Badlands & Chinatown

ONCE IN A GREAT while, a movie flashes across the horizon with stupendous brilliance, a director or a star's career is launched, a public is created, and the movie enters the annals of popular cultural history. Other times, such a movie appears and for some unknown reason flashes for only a week or two, then disappears.

Badlands was the second kind of movie. By one of those flukes of nature, the moviegoing public scorned the movie, the critics in the Big Apple were mixed, and it sank like a rock. But for those who saw it, the effect was electrifying.

Badlands is a thinly veiled rehash of the story of Charles Starkweather and Caril Ann Fugate, the couple who spread death and terror across the American midwest for a couple of weeks in 1956. The movie is the premier commercial effort of Terence Malick, who wrote and directed it. Even in some bygone age before the devaluation of verbal currency, Malick would have been called a genius for his effort.

For its sheer evocative power of the loneliness of the human condition, the movie is in a class with such as *Citizen Kane* and *The Grand Illusion*.

The two stars, Martin Sheen and Cissy Spacek, begin in a God-forsaken South Dakota town where he is a trash collector and she is an aspiring high school baton twirler. They become girlfriend and boyfriend, then lovers, with a certain surface casualness which heightens the underlying tension and violence which their loneliness and frustration have bred.

When Cissy Spacek's father bars Sheen from seeing her because of their age difference, Sheen kills the father, Spacek looks on blankly, and the murderous couple take off.

At that point the movie begins gradually to shade away from its stark beginnings and fade into a kind of dreamlike quality. The couple move into a forest and live there like beautiful feral children, living a kind of paranoid's dream—sheer luxury and lassitude while knowing that the whole world is looking for them.

As they become more actively pursued, their retreat into a dream world becomes more complete. The photography takes on a lusher, richer quality, slicker somehow, in keeping with the growing realization of their dreams to be someone, anyone, even murderers, rather than nobodies in nowhere.

The law is irrelevant to them. Their egoism is so complete that morality and civilization serve only as toys to be broken to attract more attention to themselves, so that together, they can feel themselves to be heroic figures.

Spacek records their wanderings in a kind of simple-minded but revealing oral diary: "Terror gripped the state, for who knew where Chris (Sheen) would strike next."

But for the girl, there are limits, and after a while she wants out. She notes, with the same obliviousness to what they have been doing that has marked the pair's progress throughout: "I decided that from now on I would not get involved with any hellraisers, no matter how handsome they might be."

But Sheen is after the kind of glory only death can bring. And to see the look on his face, when one of the policemen leading him to an eventual electric chair compares him to James Dean, is to know that Sheen has reached his goal.

Like all great movies, *Badlands* has many great scenes. One in particular, in which Sheen and Spacek are dancing to car radio music by Nat King Cole, in the middle of a deserted prairie lit by their car's headlights, is overpowering. All of the longing for intimacy, for recognition in an anonymous world, for the act of being someone important and cared about are evoked by the scene.

Badlands is by no means a glorification of killing. It is instead an entertaining delineation of two extremely sick individuals whose personalities have the flaws we all have but carried to a lunatic extreme. It is subtle, tender, and beautiful. All in all, it is a movie to learn from and be dazzled by.

Unfortunately, the movie that was and is packing them in, is all surface and no substance. *Chinatown*, Roman Polanski's effort at a Ross MacDonald/Raymond Chandler mystery story set in the 1930s is long-winded, boring, and showy. It is an in-joke known only to Polanski and his intimates, if at all, and the viewer never gets the punchline.

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The movie glories in Jack Nicholson's 1930s suits and hair style, Faye Dunaway's 1930s dresses, hairstyle, and makeup, and everybody's 1930s cars and houses.

The plot is supposed to be a terribly complicated story of terribly evil men raping their daughters and stealing water from parched farmers to gratify their evil instincts. Polanski's penchant for gore comes through too, as it does in all his movies, when he plays a small time hood who cuts off part of Nicholson's nose for no good reason.

It is exemplary of the in-jokey nature of the movie that Nicholson plays most of the time with a large bandage and then hideous stitches on his nose. What possible point it serves is the true mystery of the movie.

With his perpetual mocking, condescending, superior tone, Nicholson is exactly wrong as a hardboiled, earthy detective. Luckily for the moviegoer who finds himself watching *Chinatown*, Faye Dunaway turns in a superb performance as the crazed centerpiece of the drama which never really gets off the ground. Those of us who remember her grisly end in *Bonnie and Clyde*, however, may begin to wonder why Faye Dunaway ever allows herself to get into a car when there are guns around.

Even the title is enigmatic and unedifying. It is supposed to be some kind of allusion to the dark and incomprehensible forces of human nature which are exemplified by the murky nature of life in Chinatown, but just how life in Chinatown is different from life anywhere else, except visually, is never made clear or even hinted at.

The movie is a lush attempt at a nostalgic film *noir*, but it never even comes close to portraying the depravity and evil of those much lamented grade B thrillers.

Chinatown is a museum of a movie, full of interesting artifacts, but lacking any dramatic interplay to bring them together into a genuinely exciting or even lively movie.

It is simply an exploitation of gore and nostalgia, as subtle and true to life as a tarantula eating a piece of angel food cake, but a lot less scary. □

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Current Wisdom

REPORT FROM L.A.: Definitive report on the SLA's last stand from one of THE NATION's resident imbeciles:

There is not as much difference as law-abiding citizens would like to believe between the psychology of the SLA and that of FBI agents and most police in battle. In this instance, both sides were imbued with the politics of desperation and unlimited force. Locked in combat, the actors, lawful and lawless alike, behaved as if their roles had been written for them in a movie script, stripped of everything human except violence without limit.

—*The Nation*
June 1, 1974

BELIEVE IT OR NOT: The incomparable NEW REPUBLIC reveals Glad Tidings, heretofore unnoticed by the Taxpayer Americanus:

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare does not move with the light step of the thoroughbred, but with the earnest, plodding tread of the workhorse.

—*The New Republic*
July 6 & 13, 1974

GEOGRAPHY FOR BEGINNERS: Proof that in the eyes of THE NEW YORK TIMES all that lies beyond the Hudson River is one vast Kansas:

Replying to gibes yesterday by his colleague, Senator J.W. Fulbright, Democrat of Kansas. . . .

—*The New York Times*
July 9, 1974

HATE AMERICA, INC.: The American Scene as viewed by a house fabulist at the distinguished NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS:

For one may violate the Constitution in the name of national security and remain a saintly patriot in the eyes of a majority of Americans. However, use the word "shit" in a private meeting with your aides, and you are in a different sort of trouble, for this is a violation of social customs, which go deeper and are more demanding than law or ethics.

–*The New York Review of Books*
June 27, 1974

A QUACK ON QUACKERY: Documented proof that there lingers a whiff of hope for all rational, forward-looking persons in this abominable country we call Amerika:

The Divine Light Mission and the Unification Church, not to mention dozens of similar sects, may be only pseudo-mystical at bottom—if social and religious reform are intrinsic consequenses—but perhaps even the facade of mysticism is sufficient to constitute a deviation from the expected conformity to the standards of our *demented* society. And that is a sign of hope that there are still alternatives open for the future, whether the current options are genuine or not. As a revolutionary, at least as a scout, Rennie Davis is probably far ahead of us all; time alone will tell. It will be instructive to see what happens next. Perhaps Abbie Hoffman will become a Jesuit.

—*The Progressive*
June, 1974

"Whom the gods destroy, they

first make mad" — Euripides

(SIC): What follows is perhaps the most gorgeous specimen of ethnic neurosis ever displayed on this page. Our thanks to the authorities of the Maryland State Mental Hospital who gave Mr. Paul Johnson freedom to exercise on the op-ed page of the historic BALTIMORE SUN:

In recounting a conversation with his late brother, Stewart, Joseph Alsop, in his syndicated column last week, quoted him as having said, ". . . I begin to suspect we have seen the best time in this country."

Yet one's optimism—or lack of it—on the future posture of the nation is largely determined by the vantage point from which the nation is perceived.

If one is a scion of the WASP Yankee families as the Alsops (their cousins, the Roosevelts), the Rockefellers, Whitneys, Fords, Vanderbilts, Astors, Lodges, Cabots, Lowells, and Adamses et al, I would agree any pessimism could be authentically portentous.

I suspect Stewart Alsop, in his dying, glimpsed enough of the future to recognize that the days of the reign of his class—their values and prejudices, so deeply ingrained in American civilization—are thankfully numbered.

His best of times were the worse (sic) of times for too many others.

The conviction that a particular group "by virtue of its breeding and intelligence and disinterested love of service, ought by right to manage the country" is historically and sociologically passé.

America's true strength and long-range durability lie in its cultural and social plurality. Out of her bowels has arisen a new culture—diversified in nature, but unified in the goal of equal access to the positions of economic and political governance in the land.

This new phalanx is black, Jewish, women, Chicano, American Indian, and those of East European extraction. These are the new vantage points.

The recent over-emphasis on an alleged breakdown of coalition between Jews and blacks or the supposed inability of East European backgrounded Americans and blacks to co-operate, and the new "new-found evidence" to support an hypothesis of the genetic inferiority of blacks are contrivances of a dying social order clinging frantically to its self-perpetuating fantasies.

Anyone who is a member of the new phalanx; anyone who is passionately and completely alive; anyone who is in love with life in America now is angry. Angry because America has reneged on its promise. A promise of social freedom and economic opportunity to allow all of us to say smugly as we approach our end that our day was the best of times.

Yes, Mr. Alsop, there is hope for the future, but I don't think you would have been very happy or comfortable in it.

For your world assumed that if it were happy and comfortable and free, all men were happy and comfortable and free. Your world assumed that if others were not as fortunate as you it was because they did not aspire diligently enough to those things which you valued so highly.

Too many times in our history your world was given the opportunity to put into reality what America since 1776 has said on paper. Too many times your world chose to be blind and securely locked itself inside its illusions.

Now, even before the country is 200 years old, are you already mourning its decline because your sun has set? Was this land founded then only to satisfy the desires and sustain the positions of a few?

Bob Dylan told you what to expect, but you couldn't hear him:

As the present now/will later be past, the order is rapidly fadin'/and the first one now will later be last/for the times they are a changin'.

—*The Baltimore Sun*
June 8, 1974

THE CAPITALISTS' ROPE: While reviewing "cold warrior" Alexander Solzhenitsyn's latest book, TIME magazine exposes the illusions of an idiot:

In the old cold war days, Americans might have joined Solzhenitsyn in his urgings. But detente, the benefits of trade, the establishment of a Chase bank in Moscow, and the hope for arms limitations have made the U.S. more tolerant of the Kremlin.

—*Time*
July 15, 1974

MEDITATIONS: Athlete and actor Robert Redford defines politics and proves the originality of his fabulous intellect:

Just a game, the public always getting ripped off, all those infantile minds in the Pentagon and in office taking it out on the country because they never made the squad when they were kids.

—*The New York Times Magazine*
July 7, 1974

PRESIDENTIAL GREATNESS: From Mr. Earl Wilson, an American Gibbon:

My respect for John F. Kennedy as a President and person was enormous. Yet Presidents, as other men, are all things. John F. Kennedy was a great man and a fine man, but he was also a man in the manly sense, one of the manliest of the masculine. And this adds a new dimension to the humanness of JFK. For what is more human than Sex? Most of our country's leaders in previous administrations had been too old to enjoy lovemaking. But John F. Kennedy was young, healthy, and virile. I truly believe he would have approved my contention that he was the sexiest, swingingest President of the century, and not have thought it disrespectful.

—*Show Business Laid Bare*
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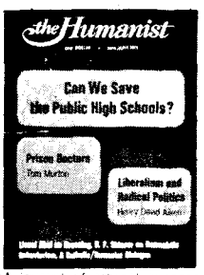

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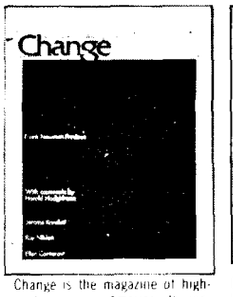

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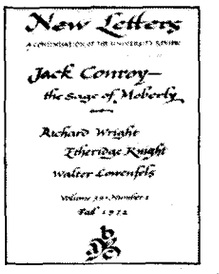

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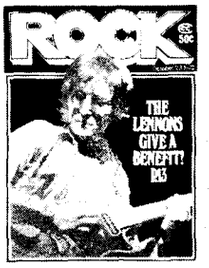

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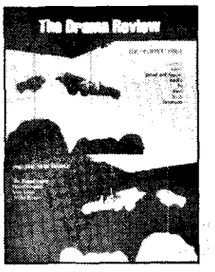

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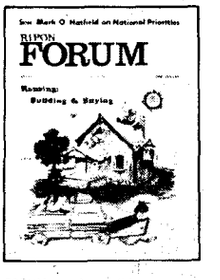

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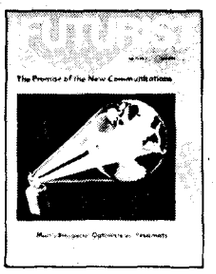

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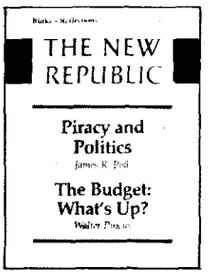

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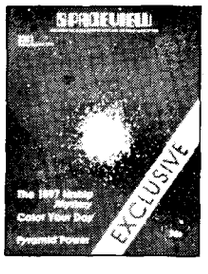

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Correspondence

To the Editor:

We have no coffee budget. We have a Sanka budget—about $50 a year. How many light malts and crumpets would that buy?

Gilbert Harrison
Editor-in-Chief
The New Republic
Washington, D.C.

To the Editor:

I thank Mr. Plattner for a most excellent review of John Rawls' "A Theory of Justice."

It reminded me of the treatise of J. Edward Thornton, writing in *The Alabama Lawyer,* October, 1973.

Thornton noted the significant coincidence between the advent of Marxism and the broad scale erosion of the ancient doctrine, as Communism certainly cannot tolerate self-reliance and personal responsibility and achievement as a standard or a course of conduct. Thus, the Marxist motto: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." Thornton commented: "Neither Soviet Russia nor Communist China has ever accepted or made any effort to practice this slogan. It remained for the New Deal in this country under President Roosevelt and Harry Hopkins to accept it and attempt to put it in practice. Consequences became divorced from purposeful effort. Furthermore, personal responsibility became attenuated. The rich became rich only by stealing from the poor. The poor were poor only because they were stolen from or abused by corporate irresponsibility. Man no longer reaped what he sowed; if needy (and who isn't?) he reaped what others sowed. If guilty of anti-social conduct requiring malice, such as robbery, arson, rape or kidnapping, the actor was not responsible; these were merely manifestations of social imbalance! By standards of this nature, the liquidation of the Jews by Hitler and the Kulaks by Stalin could be described as just."

Kelsey Hutchinson
Tulsa, Oklahoma

To the Editor:

As a student of journalism I take heart in seeing that through *The Alternative,* the English tongue (and cheek) has somehow managed to thread its way through the vast wasteland of current low brow American verbiage and survive in a God-forsaken farmhouse in the far reaches of Indiana.

In more mundane terms, I am pleased beyond ecstasy to see that somewhere in the midst of our sober fourth estate, a group of successful gazetteers also possess my penchant for the amusing (i.e. The Continuing Crisis).

I see pins stuck in the pompous! I find intelligent discourse betwixt conservatives and liberals! Hats off to R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr. and his merry band of quill bedecked hooligans!

Dennis B. Roddy
Johnstown, Pennsylvania

To the Editor:

You will be pleased to hear that I sent your April Fools gift subscription to one of the local idiot radicals, and the fellow hasn't spoken to me since.

Roger Copeland
Athens, Ohio

To the Editor:

It is, probably, unusual for a Canadian to be writing to, let alone reading, a magazine which is so, obviously, American. However, what you have heard of the Canadian temperament towards our southern neighbors is not reflected in all northern circles. I have supported the United States for several years and now that I am in college my respect for your nation, etc., is only increased by the irrational, illogical, and feverish desire for the Canadian "identity," which my academic companions strive for, through the belief that for our national purpose we must cast out the American imperialists. The unfortunate part of all these national ravings is that the paranoia which is the basis for these movements is spreading. Ignorance, my American confreres, is the base for their (our) fears. It has been pointed out that Canada and the United States could, possibly, be compared to sleeping with an elephant. You roll and we squirm away, trying to survive amidst your vastness.

Nevertheless, onward. It is quite difficult to be an American supporter at a Canadian university, and my pro-American stance is disliked by many—including radical American youths who come north to take part in our academics. I have been exposed to American teaching aides who convert discussion groups into personal retaliation time against their former home. Tisc tisc!!

Yes, the life of a pro-American in a Canadian university is not a bed of roses, but as long as I have a breath within me I will continue to aid in securing more rational relations between the two most prosperous nations in history. And for those of you who have never been to Canada, that great northern giant, please feel free to visit and see that we too have color TV, campers, TV dinners, late movies, and pizza places. And please, if you are ignorant of our ways and places please do not offend the natives by asking, what to us are stupid questions, if the Queen is in residence at the British Columbia legislature, or don't we have igloos and seals on our front doors, etc. American tourists are held captive by their instinct that all customs, traditions, and weather stop and suddenly change at the forty-ninth parallel! Yes, there is true ignorance on both sides of those customs officials, and there are many occasions for joint criticisms bent toward each other, but a little understanding and a lot of learning could help both our peoples toward better relations.

Yours sincerely, from a northerner with plenty of gas and oil,

Norman F. Stowe
Vancouver, British Columbia

To the Editor:

I have found that in the two years I have read *The Alternative*, your "Continuing Crisis" is both vicious and humorous. This section of your magazine has indeed scathed today's liberals, especially the "Spock-marked" radicals of the sixties and seventies.

Indeed, Mr. Tyrrell, you must write your fine "Crisis" column under the influence of a cigar, a pretzel, a beer (or more), and in the style of the great H. L. Mencken.

Mercuriously yours,
Greg Du Loope
Reading, Pennsylvania

To the Editor:

I have noticed that arguments in your magazine tend to be saucy and unsupported, or supported by abstract appeals to fundamental principles, but rarely supported by empirical evidence. In pointing this out, I mean in no way to criticize your sauce or your principles, but only to offer some suggestions for improvements. Some reflections on your June–September issue will serve as my point of departure.

That issue contained a first-rate essay by Irving Kristol on utopianism, a book review qualifying some similarities drawn between Marx and Burke, and an assessment of John Kenneth Galbraith by Harold Demsetz. Kristol drew a distinction between being reasonable and being rational, which was essentially the same distinction your reviewer drew between Marx and Burke. Burke was reasonable, because he glorified reason but at the same time feared the tendency of reasoners to retreat into the metaphysical cobwebs of their minds, and to disregard the facts and circumstances of political society (though Burke occasionally spun some webs of his own). Marx, on the other hand, was rational; though he possessed a great mastery of facts, he was not attentive to them, and he composed great intellectual systems but was trapped in the murky metaphysics of the dialectic and the labor theory of value.

My point is that when your magazine enters the realm of reason (which is not always), it often tends to be more rational than reasonable. Demsetz's evaluation of Galbraith shows what it is like to be reasonable and how effective that approach can be. A saucy put-down or an abstract defense of market principles cannot do proper justice to Galbraith's hypotheses. But before the lance of Demsetz's empirical evidence, or in this case, absence of evidence, Galbraith's "New Industrial State" tumbles like a house of cards.

George Bogart
Ann Arbor, Michigan

To the Editor

The review of "The Sting" in the June–September issue seemed to me to miss the point of the film. After sucking the viewer along throughout the film inflating his feeling of depth and intelligence, Mr. Hill hits you with the biggest con of all. Most people were able to laugh at this, but apparently Mr. Stein cannot handle being stung. Perhaps he feels he has too much to lose in being fooled at his own game.

S.M. Hawkins
Boston, Massachusetts

To the Editor:

While reading Irving Kristol's article, two quotations came to mind. From Michael Oakeshott's *Rationalism in Politics*, "The conjunction of dreaming and ruling generates tyranny." And Peter Bauer's oft-employed maxim, "When a proposition is taken as an article of faith, the evidence becomes irrelevant." That article and the rest of the issue as well proved again that there is yet sense, and indeed, wisdom enlivening the "public conversation."

Bruce E. Meyer
St. Andrews, Scotland

To the Editor:

Irving Kristol's "Utopianism, Ancient and Modern" (June–September, 1974) was one of the finest articles I have read in your magazine recently. I particularly liked the contrast he drew between visions of heavenly and visions of earthly paradise. If I can infer correctly from this contrast, those thinkers from the eighteenth century onward who tried to construct the heavenly city on earthly foundations, fundamentally distorted the traditional notion of paradise, which precludes not just construction on earth but *any* construction by man at all.

I'm wondering, however, whether the modern utopian frame of mind might not in some ways be responsible for those examples of real progress which man has made in the last few centuries—Mr. Kristol mentioned progress in technology and in economic growth, and he just as easily could have added health care. Although the apocalyptic environmentalists may contend that our proclaimed progress is not really progress at all, in some ways we have made progress, and many of the men who have led us there have been guided by notions that the world is not inevitably fallen, that human capacities are not finite, that man can escape his historical limitations and remake his world. It was Henry Ford, after all, who said that "history is bunk," and the architects of the moon landing could easily have said the same thing.

With this brief rejoinder, I congratulate Mr. Kristol on his article and look forward to reading more such essays in your magazine.

Sonia Sanford
Woodbridge, Connecticut

To the Editor:

Concerning Kristol's analysis of utopianism:

First, the Old and New Testaments are not, and certainly do not claim to be, simple myths. Nor are they a "kind of poetry" such as Plato takes to task in the *Republic* and the *Symposium*. The difference between Agathon and Moses, Isaiah, Luke, John, etc. is summarized precisely in the familiar "Thus Saith the Lord." I would suggest that Professor Strauss's hermeneutics are fine for explicating Plato, but leave a bit to be desired for understanding His Revelation.

Second, Professor Kristol's implication that there exists a fundamental connection between Reformational interpretation of Biblical prophecy and dime store sociological augury is, at best, questionable. One need not even speculate about how seriously our contemporary oracles would have been taken in, for example, Calvin's Geneva!

Finally, modern utopianism is indeed an attempt to realize in deeds the ideals of dreams. The proper antidote, however, does not consist merely in a rehashing of premodern, classical political theory into "new versions of old ideas." On the most basic level, utopianism is the creature's attempt to build a heaven of his own making here on earth against the will of the Creator. Put otherwise, the humble recognition of our creatureliness, and the concomitant recognition of our complete inability to construct that heaven, must be the first step on the road back to a decent political order.

Mark Tapscott
Irving, Texas

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